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THE CABAL.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

THE CABAL.

A Tale

OF THE

REIGN OF WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
JAMES COCHRANE AND CO.,
11, WATERLOO-PLACE.

1831.

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THE CABAL.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"For well you know, we of the offering side
Must keep aloof from strict arbitrement;
And stop all sight-holes, every loop, from whence
The eye of reason may pry in upon us."

Henry IV.

When he returned to Arleston next morning, the count was very eloquent on the subject of the meeting. He seemed to admire the speeches of Thistleton, and the stranger from London, much more than any others. In fact, his enthusiastic admiration of the British constitution had been

unable to withstand Harry Mowbray's insidious attacks, and he was now a very violent radical.

When it was discovered that the orator, whom the German praised so loudly, and whose eloquence had been so successful, was the same person with the ruffian who had attracted the attention of Lady Burlington, her ladyship was extremely curious to learn his history.

"Who can he be?" said she, "he was in conversation with Mr. Sillary; let us ask him."

"It is impossible Mr. Sillary could have any acquaintance with such a person," said Lady Rothsay, with some sharpness. "Depend upon it, there is some mistake. Is Lord Owen's appearance so extremely eccentric as it is generally represented to be?" continued she, hoping to turn the conversation; but in vain.

"He certainly knew something of him," persisted Lady Burlington, "for I saw them shake hands very cordially. I think there can be no mistake, for, besides Harry Mowbray's testimony,

we have the count's description, which tallies precisely. Let us ask Mr. Sillary about the man. But, by the way, where is he? I have not seen him to-day."

"Nor last night," added the duke. "I was particularly anxious to obtain his opinion on my friend Baron Kreutzer's recent publication, on the Tribunals of England."

"Where can Mr. Sillary be?" exclaimed half a dozen voices.

"He promised me a manuscript sermon, by Foster," said Lady Martha Montford: "he was to get me Lord Brougham's autograph," said the heiress: "he was to teach me the genuine method of making Craigdarroch punch," said the Reverend Dr. Malpas.

"Please your grace," said the fat butler, "Mr. Sillary left Arleston by the mail, at five o'clock yesterday afternoon."

"And carried with him, I presume," cried Harry Mowbray, "sermon, autograph, and recipe

—if they ever had existence except in his own fertile imagination. Oh! faithless Mr. Sillary!"

"Now that I remember," said Lord William, as if recalling the circumstance with effort, "he made me an apology for leaving Arleston so suddenly. He had unexpected business in town. I think he said he would return to-morrow."

"I hope he will," said Horace Hopkins; "such sort of people are very useful at an election to communicate with the middle classes."

"*We* must set about *our* canvass busily to-day, to make up for lost time yesterday," said pretty Lady Burlington, aping the Countess of Rothsay's grave looks as well as she could, and trying to look as full of business as possible.

"We may visit Mr. Osbaldiston," said Lady Martha, "and the Reverend Malachi Melville, and perhaps Hezekiah Henderson."

"There are two visits, brother," said Lady Rothsay, "which I must insist upon your making before any others. We have treated Lady de

Cantilupe shamefully. I mean to accompany you, for you will need all my assistance to encounter her indignation. And then, you really must call on Lady Sophia Sefton; you have been extremely rude. You might very well have left your card, at all events, when you were almost at the very gate yesterday."

"You must excuse his forgetfulness, Lady Rothsay," observed Harry Mowbray, with most laudable perseverance, "you must remember the attractions of Gideon Cottage."

"Really, I have some doubt," said Lord William, "whether her ladyship will thank me for my inquiries. It is her pride to talk of such accidents with contempt."

"What a very disagreeable woman is Lady Sophia," remarked Miss Turnbull—"so masculine, and so rude."

"Very masculine, certainly," said Mowbray. "I understand she offers to fight any woman, of her weight, in England, without the gloves."

The carriages were announced, and the greater part of the company determined to accompany Lord William to Cantilupe Castle.

It was a beautiful winter morning, the lightness of the air was truly exhilarating, and the sun shone with a bright but not an ardent ray. Mowbray, who had the honour of driving Lady Burlington, amused her with an account of the lady whom they were going to visit.

Milicent de Cantilupe, in her own right Baroness de Cantilupe, and the twenty-fifth inheritor of the barony, is a maiden of ninety years of age. Her patrimony is extremely small, but her pride proportionably great. She practises the most rigid economy, in order to preserve some shadow of that princely magnificence, by which her ancestors gradually wasted their extensive possessions. In her youthful days, she had the credit of having rejected more suitors than any lady in the kingdom. She was indeed a celebrated beauty, and, bating a little pride, which sat

gracefully on her queen-like brow, agreeable and accomplished. But her ruling passion was the vanity of birth, and, it is said, she had made a vow that the barony should never pass to strangers by her means. As she grew older, this passion strengthened into an incurable disease, which has soured a temper naturally easy, and chilled a heart naturally warm.

Her heir, and near kinsman, Waltheof de Cantilupe, has been educated in her house. On him she pours, unchecked, the full tide of her affection, and, in him, worships the living representative of that name, to the honour of which her life has been devoted. He is a man of recluse habits and eccentric tastes: heraldry, genealogy, and other branches of antiquarian study, are his favourite pursuits.

In less than two hours they came in sight of the county town, close to which, on a bold wooded rock, to the north-west, stands the ancient residence of this haughty family.

The massy towers of the castle, and the stately spires of five venerable churches, were seen towering above the smoke which floated lightly in the bright winter sun. The town is situated on a circular peninsula, formed by a winding of the majestic river. On the western side, immediately below the castle walls, there is a public promenade, occupying little less than a hundred acres, girdled by a noble boundary of oaks which then stretched their giant-limbs, stripped of their summer honours, in fantastic lines against the sky. On the opposite bank, the cliffs, dark and abrupt, seemed still darker from the dazzling bed of snow from which they rose. The entrance to the town from the west is by, what is called, "the Robber-bridge," from the defence which its ponderous fortifications formerly afforded against the banditti of the neighbouring mountains. There are three gates on this bridge, and the one furthest from the town is secured by a formidable outwork, which also guards the ford

below. The entrance is furnished with a portcullis, and doors studded with iron, and is surmounted by a circular tower pierced with six loop-holes. As they passed below, Mowbray pointed out a small outlet immediately above their heads, through which heated oil was wont to be poured upon those assailants who had the hardihood to try the strength of the gate with their battle axes.

The principal street is terminated by the castle. Its walls are of extraordinary thickness, pierced with cruciform loop-holes, and fortified with towers, alternately round and square, at irregular distances. It is separated from the town by a broad ditch, cut out of the solid rock; and, on every other side, it is bounded by an inaccessible precipice.

There are two gates, an outer and an inner, separated by a large court, which still retains some remnants of ancient magnificence, but it is overgrown with grass, and the towers by which

it is surrounded are roofless, crumbling, and filled with rubbish. In a canopied niche, directly above the outer entrance, there is the figure of a youth, in the dress worn by pages in the chivalrous ages. He seems to have been hurled backwards by his enemy, and is supporting himself on one knee. He has a broken sword in one hand, and is pointing with the other to a small knife in his girdle.

Above the inner gate are the proper arms of the family, *Or a cross gules*, with the following inscription:

Hominibus ingratis loquimini
Lapides. Anno Regni Reginæ
Elizabethæ 23.
Yvo de Cantilupe caused repair
This Castell. 1581.
Peace be within his Hovs
And Prosperitie within
His Palace. Amen.

In one corner of the court there is an octa-

gonal tower, at the bottom of which a door has been opened in modern times, which is now the only entrance to the inhabited apartments, for the inner gate has been closed with a brick wall. Entering here, you are conducted by a narrow winding staircase to an immense but dilapidated hall. The torn tapestry, the wood half decayed, but curiously carved, and the gilded ceiling, hung with cobwebs, give it an air of gloomy magnificence.

Three servants in rich liveries, in which, however, they moved rather awkwardly—for they were probably called on to perform their parts at very short notice—conducted the Arleston party to a small drawing-room, the furniture of which seemed to have been selected from the wrecks of former splendour. A mirror, greatly too large for the place it occupied, was the most conspicuous article. Its frame was of massy gold, embossed with the arms of all the noble and royal families, which, in the course of seven centuries,

have been connected by marriage with the house of Cantilupe.

The baroness saluted her guests with courtesy, not unmingled with coldness. The delay which had occurred before the visit, in the course of which she had heard that Lord William had paid his respects to all the rest of the nobility, was sufficient to account for the distance of her manner. It required all Lady Rothsay's genius to remove the unfavourable impression which she had received. A falsehood, very innocently uttered, which was intended to imply, that the Arleston family had understood Lady de Cantilupe to be on a visit to her relation the Duke of Connaught, produced a very sensible effect on the old lady's countenance. She condescended to inquire into the particulars of the approaching canvass, and to offer her best services, and those of her kinsman Waltheof.

Lady Rothsay then expressed a strong desire, on the part of the company, to see the celebrated

view from the battlements, and the other wonders of Cantilupe Castle; nothing she knew could be more gratifying to the baroness. Waltheof was summoned from the library, in which, on the approach of company, he uniformly takes refuge, and nothing but an opportunity of descanting on his favourite subject can ever persuade him to leave it. Cantilupe Castle, however, and the history of the Cantilupes, are themes on which he could not refuse to discourse to the most formidable visitors. He made his appearance, accordingly, bowing, with a strange mixture of bashfulness and pride.

The view from the battlements well deserves its reputation. Towards the north, a rich and extensive plain reaches from the base of the precipice, on which the castle is erected, on a perfect level, to the distant hills of Wales. The windings of three great rivers, and nearly thirty noble mansions, half-hid in venerable woods, even in that dreary season, could not be contemplated

without pleasure. The more confined prospect, to the west, has a very different character. At a short distance, on the opposite bank of the river, the black cliffs of Kynaston, at that time crowned with snow, shoot up to an immense height, and form, with the castle rock, a deep glen, in which a part of the town, with its narrow streets, fantastic houses, and richly decorated spires, is confined.

"This Castle of Cantilupe," said Waltheof, averting his eyes as he spoke, and adopting the measured tone of a professional guide, "is the second fortified building which is known to have stood on the rock which it occupies. The old castle, termed by the Welsh *Dinan Llys Tywysog*, or the Prince's Palace, was held, in the reign of Stephen, by Gervas Paganel, for the Empress Matilda. From him it was taken by storm, by Fulke de Cantilupe, who burned it to the ground. The King himself was present at the siege. It is related by our old historian,

that, having approached too near to the walls, on one occasion, he was caught from his horse by an iron hook, fastened to a rope. That incident occurred immediately below where I now stand. King Stephen would have been slain, or taken prisoner, if my ancestor had not rescued him, at the hazard of his life. In gratitude for this service, when the castle was taken, the King rewarded him, with all the land which a man may see, in a clear day, from the rock of Cantilupe. But you must understand, that this gift was of little value to the Cantilupes for some years, for, when it was made, the King had scarcely six feet of earth in England. However, Fulke (who was also called *fiery Fulke*, from the warmth of his temper) conquered the greater part of the King's gift from his enemies, before he died."

Waltheof did not say how much of the King's gift remained in the possession of the family; but he sighed.

After they were satisfied with looking at the

view, they descended into the court of the castle. Lady Burlington expressed a great wish to learn the history of the page, whose figure is represented above the outer entrance, as I have already described.

"That page," said Waltheof, "is Hameline de Cantilupe, one of my ancestors, who built the outer fortifications of the castle. The attitude in which he is represented is in allusion to an incident which occurred to him in his youth, when he accompanied the Earl of Derby to the French wars.

"The army of the King of England was in Flanders, within a few miles of the French border. War had been declared, but hostilities had not commenced. One evening, the famous Sir Walter Manny was at supper with the earl, in a castle which he then occupied, and many other gallant knights were present. My ancestor, who was then a boy, and served Lord Derby, as his page, according to the fashion of the times,

waited on them reverently, with the other pages. But I will read you the story as it is written in the life of Sir Hameline, by the Reverend Jeremy de Cantilupe, Bishop of Lincoln in the reign of Queen Elizabeth."

So saying, Waltheof led them into the library, and opening a worm-eaten little volume, read as follows.

"The wine-cup had done its office, and the mirth of the guests waxed more boisterous than was seemly.

"Then said Sir Walter Manny—

"'Gallant knights, and you, my right noble Lord of Derby, if we were good men at arms, we might drink this night of the wines of France.'

"'Let us ride across the border!' cried the earl, 'in the name of God and St. George; and this jewel shall be *his*, who strikes the first blow for Edward Plantagenet.'

"Tables and benches were overthrown; the

floor of the hall was flooded with wine, and the court-yard echoed with the clash of mail, and the neighing of horses: torches, tossed hither and thither, flashed through the gloom of the night, and were reflected on every side by lance, and helm, and the waving of banners, hastily unfurled. A youth of gallant bearing, whose long hair streamed in the blast by which his torch had been extinguished, had uncased the banner of Derby, and, too impatient to untie, was cutting, with a knife which he had snatched from the table of the hall, the thongs by which its folds were secured. Meanwhile, the name of Hameline de Cantilupe was repeated more than once from the outer gate, and, hastily cutting the last thong, with a muttered execration, he thrust the knife into his girdle, shook the banner abroad in the night-breeze, and hurried to his master.

"The knights gave their horses the rein, and urged them to their utmost speed; and, in a few hours, just as the gray light of morning was

breaking on the mountains, the earl arrived in sight of Montaigne, with an attendance of some sixty lances.

"Then said the Lord of Derby to his page—

"'This is your first fray, Hameline, let your bearing be worthy of your birth. Spur your steed, and ride forward before the rest, and strike your hand three times on yonder barriers. Thus shall you win the jewel which I have promised.'

"Now Hameline was yet a boy, and he could not look upon the walls, already thronged with knights in full armour, without fear. But, when the earl saw that his cheek was pale, he spoke roughly to him, saying,

"'Would you win your mistress without wooing, young man? Never was craven seen of the house of Cantilupe before.'

"Then the young man did as the Lord of Derby had commanded. And the garrison were astonished at his courage, but they would not

slay him, for they said—he is a boy. Howbeit, the Count de Couci, a knight of gigantic stature, was provoked by the insult, and his wrath was kindled against Hameline, and he pursued after him, to kill him. And he overtook him, and wounded him, and smote him to the ground, and brake his sword into three pieces with his battle-axe. Then he caught him by the throat, and would have slain him. But Hameline remembered the knife which he had thrust into his girdle; and he closed with the Count de Couci, and drew forth the knife, and pierced him to the heart. And this was done in the sight of both parties. And the earl of Derby gave Hameline the jewel which he had promised. And the jewel, and the knife, and the battle-axe of the Count de Couci, are kept in the castle of Cantilupe unto this day."

CHAPTER XIX.

"Thou knowest that all my fortunes are at sea;
Nor have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth,
Try what my credit can in Venice do."

Merchant of Venice.

At an early hour on the same morning, Sillary knocked at Maria Cibber's door. He sent in his name, and was instantly admitted.

He had not been with Maria many minutes before a loud shriek was heard, which Ann recognised as proceeding from her mistress. The servants ran up stairs. They found her insensible. The attorney did not display his usual self-possession. He was evidently agitated. His agitation however subsided as Maria revived,

and, when she had completely recovered, he took his leave, with a most respectful obeisance.

What had passed at this interview, Ann's most ingenious stratagems were unable to discover. Maria attributed her swoon to a sudden illness. The curiosity of the servants was baffled.

Sillary's next visit was to his grace of Cornwall, with whom he was closeted for two hours.

He then proceeded to the Royal Exchange. He found the man, of whom he was in search, standing beside his accustomed pillar. Garments, not particularly new, linen, by no means singularly white, a sallow cheek, a round ungainly figure, an attitude of quiet self-satisfied vulgarity, the feet a little apart, the hands thrust as far as might be into the breeches' pocket—add, an undefinable expression of the acutest cunning, which occasionally flitted over the inanimate countenance, and some other badges of his tribe, equally unequivocal, and you have the portrait

of Mordecai Benezra, the Jew, the counsellor of kings, the ruler of the dynasties of Europe.

After loading the people with debt, and taxing all things, from the rarest luxuries, to the free light of heaven, the profligate ambition of European monarchs is still ravenous for gold. On the verge of bankruptcy, like other spendthrifts, they have had recourse to the assistance of the Jews. The despised race of Israel, from the petty extortions of ordinary usury, have been called to the absolute sway of the destinies of nations. From the servants they have become the tyrants of their royal customers. Not a trumpet may be blown on the Ebro, not a sword can be drawn on the Danube: the ukase of the autocrat is an useless parchment, and the thunder of the Vatican an empty sound, till their consent has been obtained.

Their power, springing from the cupidity and extravagance of governments, has no more dangerous foes than economy and virtue. Against

these, it ever wages an exterminating war. No just resistance, no movement in the sacred cause of liberty, will find prompt succour in the cunning tribe of Jacob; but, let a tyrant's throne be in danger, they will compass sea and land to perpetuate his reign. And, if an honest minister shall propose reduction, or, if a patriot king shall consent to reform, with what eager zeal they send forth all their emissaries, and open all their treasures, to preserve that corruption, which is the basis of their power!

But, even in such a cause, their prudence never forsakes them. Every shilling they expend will *tell.* No gratitude for old favours, no friendship for old friends, is permitted to mingle with the pure selfishness of their motives.

The most selfish, the most cunning, the most powerful of his tribe, the richest among the rich, is Mordecai, the Jew. To him the nations of the east and west—to him the wisest statesmen and the greatest kings do homage. His is the

pomp of courts, the strength of armies. The proud Hun crouches at his feet, and the autocrat, on the throne of a thousand nations, trembles at his frown.

Sillary's audience did not last many minutes. However important his business, it could not compete with a loan, which was to decide the fate of three republics, and two crowned heads.

His next visit was to the Marquis of Tewkesbury's rooms in the Albany. If you wish to know his lordship's character, take it in a single line—he is a man whose whole revenue is derived from the race-course and the gaming-table.

The marquis was still in bed, enjoying a profound repose, dearly purchased by the feverish excitement and unrelaxing vigilance of three successive nights. However, on receiving a message, that a gentleman from Lord William Plantagenet desired to speak with him, he ordered Sillary to be admitted.

The conversation was long, and, on Lord

Tewkesbury's part, rather loud. Gianetti, his lordship's favourite valet, would probably have secured the greater part of it, for the benefit of the public, if it had not been for those infernal double doors, which, as he swore in choice Italian, confoundedly curtail his information on such occasions. Before the conclusion of the interview, however, his lordship's voice was much less audible; and, when Sillary withdrew, he accompanied him to the door, and parted with him in the most gracious manner.

From the Albany, the attorney hastened to Cellini's gallery in Regent-street. That temple of extravagance was as brilliant as ever. The pictures, the jewels, the statues, the plate, all ornaments for the room or for the person, mingled in grotesque but gorgeous confusion, and multiplied by the reflection of a hundred mirrors, seemed to realise the scenes of Lalla Rookh, or the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

In the centre stood Cellini, the high-priest of

the temple, bewhiskered and bechained; his raven locks tortured into the most interesting ringlets, and his lady fingers sparkling with diamonds. He was descanting in most silken tones on the authenticity of a Jew rabbi, by Rembrandt, to a young nobleman, who had still some money to lose.

When the nobleman retired with improved haste and lightened purse, Sillary stept forward. "Aha! Signor Sillary, you be one small hour too late," said the Italian, in somewhat rougher note: "I could not wait."

"Good God! you have not done any thing yet, have you?" asked the attorney in some anxiety.

"I have sent to mine good friend Mudford. But if you have the money, perhaps——"

"You shall have the money, my dear Cellini; I give my honour, you shall. I will satisfy you on the subject in five minutes."

They stepped into the Italian's private room,

and, before long, a messenger was despatched to recall the orders which had been given to Mr. Mudford.

Sillary spent the remainder of the day in hunting through all the clubs, and various lodging-houses in Jermyn-street, St. James's-place, and the vicinity, for certain young men who were on terms of intimacy with Lord William Plantagenet, and in calling on a multitude of tradesmen, who enjoyed the honour of his patronage.

CHAPTER XX.

"—— Cheer your heart:
Be you not troubled with the time which drives
O'er your content these strong necessities;
But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewail'd their way."

Antony and Cleopatra.

Sillary had still one engagement. It led him about midnight to a house in the immediate neighbourhood of St. James's-square. He seemed to have been expected, for he was admitted in silence. The servant showed him into a large apartment elegantly furnished, at the further extremity of which a young man of fashionable appearance was stretched on a sofa.

There is only one person in the world, whose

talents in political intrigue enjoy Lady Rothsay's undissembled veneration. Her brother she condescends to instruct; but from Hyde Clinton she is content to learn. Removed by fortune from the temptation of sordid motives, and secured by principles sufficiently latitudinarian from the influence of political enthusiasm, Clinton pursues intrigue with the passion of an amateur. From the pure love of science he has studied every manœuvre in the tactics of party, and from the pure love of art he has acquired, by incessant practice, the most exquisite address in every form and mode of dissimulation. His manners are exclusive or popular, rude or polished, candid or reserved, as best suits the purpose of the moment; and although from a strange inconsistency of nature he is unable to utter three words in public without the most painful embarrassment, in private conversation he can wield with ease every weapon of argu-

ment, from the most subtile logic to the keenest sarcasm, from the most refined artifice of rhetoric to the lowest trick of vulgar buffoonery.

It is hard to tell, with certainty, when he has laid aside the mask which he wears so naturally; but, if I may judge from the terms on which he stood with Sillary, I think he was at this moment as nearly inclined to be sincere as he ever is with any man.

"So, Sillary," said he, "we are the only punctual men in the club. Tewkesbury and the rest, I dare be sworn, will not be here for an hour. I suppose you know old Turnbull is at Fairhaven."

"I know he is. I saw him there for a few minutes in passing."

"We 'll speak of that business presently. In the mean time, I must tell you, we are going on splendidly. Three new recruits this morning—Sir Matthew Dymocke, Sir David Lorimer, and one Nicholson of the guards."

"I am glad you have been so successful; but I know nothing of these gentlemen."

"Few do, I believe: but what does that signify? Two of them are in the House already, and I think we can contrive to bring in the third. Give me *votes:* talents are more troublesome than useful. From the moment I heard what passed at the meeting at Lancaster-house, I was convinced that we had nothing to hope from the wiseacres who assume the lead in the party. What matters it that one is a good man of business, another a tolerable speaker, a third a profound lawyer? The few men of character among them have each his own hobby, to which he clings with the blindest obstinacy, and the rest have lost all influence in the country by perpetual trimming. Then they are so nice and cautious in all their measures, and so much afraid of the press, which they pretend to despise, that they are not to be trusted for a single day. I saw that we were lost, if we did not rely upon ourselves.

Fortunately we have found men enough willing to be led, too insignificant to fear public censure, and glad of any occasion which will give them consequence. You shall see; they may think us fools, but our little club will beat King, Lords, and Commons before we have done."

"You are very confident."

"I have reason. There must be a dissolution. I see that as well as you. There *will* be a dissolution. Lady Rothsay may think what she pleases of her influence in a certain quarter. No influence on earth can prevent it. But we have made our arrangements. The great statesmen, who have such a high opinion of their own wisdom, will be defeated in some of their strongholds; but our little junta will not be defeated. Our number is not great, but we will stick together, and that is the chief point. A determined minority has more in its power than most people imagine. This reform fever cannot last. We may have a war to divert the atten-

tion of the public, or an abundant harvest to put the country into good humour, or the ministry may quarrel among themselves, or some great man may die, or the King may change his mind. Delay should be our first object, and a minority may delay any measure as long as it pleases. Give me a dozen resolute men, blockheads if you will, and, with long speeches and interminable divisions, I will postpone reform, retrenchment, or what you please, to the Greek kalends."

"I am afraid our proportion of blockheads is rather large. I am told my Lord Tewkesbury's folly is sometimes a little troublesome."

"Why, I must confess, sometimes it is. But, you will allow, that there are other blockheads in the party besides the members of our club—blockheads, too, who will not be led. The obstinate pride of the duke, who clings to any measure the more closely, exactly *because* it is unpopular, or the feeble finesse of the candid

baronet, are ludicrous enough in men who pretend to be leaders of a great political party; but what shall we say of their followers? I name no names, but which is most useful—the diplomatic tact of A——, or the see-saw eloquence of B——, or the bile of C——, or the inane impertinence of D——, or the flippant egotism of E——? Shall I go on? There is a whole alphabet of incapables. Now *our* fools are manageable. Halliday, for instance, is a saint, and I was afraid he would have boggled at some of our stronger measures; but a single word on their expediency, in the present crisis, shut his mouth. Our new friend, Sir David, has been a Whig all his life, and I had some fear he might have a little of the old leaven in him still; but he draws well hitherto, and I think may be warranted neither to start nor shy. His vanity has been most deeply wounded by the neglect with which he is treated by the ministry."

"Who is Sir Matthew Dymocke?"

"You must have seen him a hundred times. Did you never observe a little old gentleman, bustling about the corner of Downing-street, with a large bald forehead, bushy eyebrows, a keen restless eye, and lips closely compressed, looking as if he carried the cares of half the nation on his shoulders?"

"I recognise the man by your description, but I did not know his name before. What is he?"

"He is a baronet of considerable property in the north, who has been trying to be somebody all his life. We must put him forward a little. He will do any thing to make himself of consequence. Such people are easily managed. Alfred Godolphin Nicholson is another that suits us exactly—one of those

'Pale guardsmen struggling into *ton*,'

who seek admission into Parliament, as they would into Almack's, for fashion's sake. The

fool is very tractable, and has money, which may be useful. He is the son of an honest butcher, who left him between two and three hundred thousand pounds the other day, which he is getting through with very tolerable alacrity. We have men enough. Give me a stout heart and a good cause, and our little club against all England!—Now tell me what you have been doing in the country. Is his lordship's election secured?"

"By no means. I have very little hope he will be successful."

"The devil!—Why, I thought Flora Macdonald was to have made that sure. I have certain information that her father can do what he will with the county."

"But there are difficulties——"

"Not on his lordship's side, I hope. Why, what would he have? The girl's fortune will be immense. Not to mention her father's enor-

mous wealth, she has an uncle in Scotland worth half a million."

"What you say is very true."

"Well, then, what are the difficulties? I much fear that damned little actress is at the bottom of the business. I wish to God Tewkesbury would walk away with her. His attentions are quite notorious. Have you seen the marquis?"

"I have not," replied Sillary, uttering the falsehood with most unblushing coolness. "I am not acquainted with Lord Tewkesbury."

"Depend upon it, Lord William's return is secure, if he can gain Macdonald's influence. The dissenters will carry the election. Tell him I said so. By the way, there is an old friend of his lordship's in that part of the country at present who may be very useful with the methodists—Lady Deborah Dacre. You remember her?"

"I do."

" His lordship was on very good terms with her before she became a saint."

" I am afraid his lordship's influence in that quarter has been at an end for several years."

" But she is an old friend."

" An old friend is often the bitterest enemy."

" There is something in that; but a little flattery may do much. There is Lady Martha Montford too; and Lady Rothsay herself knows many of these people. How does that other pet plan of her ladyship's proceed? She hoped to establish Turnbull's influence in Fairhaven, by bringing about a marriage between Mowbray and his niece. She is too fond of marriages. It is the way with all women. They will have no plot without matrimony. Has she been successful? By the way, Mowbray must be one of us, whether she succeed or fail. It will not do to have nobody but fools neither. Break the matter to him when you return, if Lord William have not done so already. There was a little

affair of the heart between Harry and a daughter of Turnbull's rival, but I fancy the golden charms of the Bristol heiress will carry the day, even without the assistance of Lady Rothsay's finesse. However, if finesse be necessary, I discovered a secret yesterday, which may be of some service. You have heard of Caroline Hamilton?"

"The celebrated beauty?"

"Better known, perhaps, as Lady Tudor, of scandalous memory."

"Every one has heard her history."

"The beginning of her history, I grant you—the scandalous chapter; but, perhaps, you are not aware that Miss Arnot's mother is no other than this same Caroline Hamilton."

"You surprise me."

"I thought I should. She has been pretty successful in concealing the identity. I suppose there are not three individuals in the country, except her immediate relations, who are aware that the pious Mrs. Arnot, of Devondale, is the

same person with the divorced Lady Tudor. I am sure Mowbray knows nothing about it, and I have a great notion that, if he were to hear the story in the right way, he would shut his heart most manfully for ever against all the charms of Miss Caroline Arnot. I have written to Lady Rothsay, and have also managed to betray the secret to her neighbour, Lord Wyaston, through whose means her ladyship will have no difficulty in communicating all the circumstances in the proper way to the proper person, whenever she finds it necessary."

"Of course you have the story on good authority?"

"The best. My mother has always been on very intimate terms with all the Hamiltons. I learned it from her in an odd enough manner the other day. Lady Cordelia Hamilton, a near relation of Lady Tudor, is on a visit at Devondale with her grand-niece, Miss Hockly, the same young lady, whose miraculous recovery from

some desperate disease has been so much talked about of late. The miracle was performed at Devondale by a methodist parson, in the presence of Lady Cordelia, Mrs. Arnot, and some other people; but such was the hardness of their hearts, that they all remained incredulous, except the patient and the parson. Some of the methodists however are determined to believe, and among the rest, my worthy mother, who has recently entered the congregation of the saints. Of course she considers Lady Cordelia and Mrs. Arnot as little better than infidels, and, in the warmth of her indignation, she betrayed this secret, which I am pretty sure I should not otherwise have discovered."

"May I ask, if the Lady Cordelia Hamilton, you mention, is of the Arran family?"

"She is a daughter of the late Duke of Arran."

"I believe she resides in Edinburgh."

"I rather think she does."

"Has she been long in England? Does she make any stay?"

"Really I know nothing of the woman. How are you interested in her motions?"

If Sillary intended to give any answer to this question, he was prevented by the entrance of Lord Tewkesbury, and some other members of the Cabal.

Clinton took the chair. They commenced business. Of course, the reader does not expect me to reveal what passed in this secret conclave.

CHAPTER XXI.

" —— Fool, do not flatter.
My conscience has a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain."

Richard III.

When Waltheof had finished the Bishop of Lincoln's narrative, he left the room, to bring the key of the armoury, which he never permitted any one to touch but himself.

" How particularly gallant our friend is to-day," said Lady Burlington. " Did you remark his attention to Miss Turnbull? I assure you, my dear Margaret, you should be very much flattered; for though his gallantry went no further than an offer of his arm, and a few timid

glances, that is a great deal from the hermit of Cantilupe, as we used to call him."

The heiress laughed, but a slight blush did not escape Lady Rothsay's observation.

The countess suddenly recollected, that she had heard of a flirtation between Waltheof and Miss Turnbull some months before. Now, to let you into a secret, she had destined the young lady's fortune for her friend Harry Mowbray, partly in mere kindness, partly as a reward for his recent apostasy, but principally from another motive, which will be fully explained in the sequel. The heiress seemed not at all unwilling to accept the husband selected for her; but Mowbray, though well aware of the honour intended him, played the part of lover rather coldly. Waltheof certainly is not the most formidable rival in the world, but, in such circumstances, any rival is formidable.

"He is a kind creature, though a little of a bore," said Lady Rothsay, continuing the conversa-

tion; "but, when we have seen the battle-axe of the Count de Couci, and the other wonders, we must take our leave, or we shall be too late to visit Wyaston to-day."

The collection of ancient armour at Cantilupe is small, but extremely curious and valuable. The perfection of its arrangement cannot be doubted, for it was completed under the special superintendence of Waltheof himself, with occasional advice from his friend Dr. Meyrick.

The antiquarian would willingly have discoursed for a month on each article it contained, and it was not without some difficulty that Lady Rothsay contrived to restrain his traditionary illustrations within reasonable bounds.

From the armoury he led them into the picture gallery. Her alarm increased every minute; for Miss Turnbull, whether she hoped to provoke Harry Mowbray's jealousy, or was dazzled by the Cantilupe pedigree, paid the most marked attention to their host.

"What was the name of that remarkably handsome man?" said she, pausing before the picture of a youth who bore a striking resemblance to Waltheof.

"That is Sir Arthur de Cantilupe, who was slain in the Low Countries, a courtier and favourite of Queen Elizabeth. The white shield leaning against the wall, with the motto *Fatum inscribat Eliza*, was his favourite device."

"I admire the dress extremely. By the way, there is to be a fancy ball at Wyaston—you are to be there, of course?"

Waltheof bowed.

"If I may offer you my advice, you should go in that character. And, in return," continued she, lowering her voice to a confidential whisper, "you must give me *your* advice. I am so puzzled about a head-dress, which shall be at once uncommon and becoming. You shall make me a few sketches of old English fashions. Nobody understands the subject better."

The countess began to think the matter serious.

"One might find amusement here for a lifetime," said she; "but I am sorry to say we shall not have light for our visit to Wyaston, if we yield to the temptation of staying any longer. The cross-road is none of the best in the world, and I confess I am a little of a coward."

"It is only a little past three," said Waltheof, "I heard the mail pass a few minutes ago. But I will not detain your ladyship. Let me hope that we may frequently have the pleasure of seeing you at Cantilupe, while you are in this part of the country. I have not shown you all our curiosities."

"I think, my lord, you expect Sillary by the mail to-day, do you not?" said Mowbray to Lord William, as they left the castle. "If we make haste, we may overtake him. You have room for him in your curricle."

As they passed the Tudor Arms, Mowbray observed Sillary in close conversation with a tall

man, wrapped in a shabby hussar cloak, whom he instantly recognised as Oliver Thistleton.

"Now then, Lady Rothsay, will you believe your eyes? There is our friend Sillary holding the radical orator by the button."

"Hush!" whispered the countess, with expressive gesture, which Mowbray apparently understood.

"My good friend, how dull you are," continued she, when she could escape the observation of the company. "You will never be a politician."

"How can you expect me to keep secrets which are not intrusted to me, Lady Rothsay?" replied Mowbray, in the same tone.

"Oh, Mr. Sillary, where *have* you been?" said Lady Martha Montford. "I have been so anxious to read that manuscript sermon by Foster. It is precisely on the point I was arguing with Lady Deborah Dacre yesterday. I am sure he must take the same view with me. I should like

to show it to Lady Deborah this evening, when she comes to Arleston."

"Mr. Sillary, you are a very naughty man," pouted the heiress. "Where is Lord Brougham's autograph? You might have left it for me when you went to town."

"And the Craigdarroch punch," groaned the Reverend Dr. Malpas. "You must make some for me after dinner."

"You have a great deal to answer for, Mr. Sillary," said Harry Mowbray, "and a great deal to do. You must regain three or four hundred votes, which we have lost by your absence, and read three folio volumes on the tribunals of Europe, before night."

"Step into my curricle," said Lord William. "You may as well call at Wyaston with us. I think you do not know Lord Wyaston. You will find him a very useful acquaintance. He knows every thing and every body."

"Well, Sillary," continued his lordship, when

they were by themselves, "will she listen to reason?"

"She will not, my lord. Indeed, I am afraid we have gone too far. She may take some violent step to make the matter public."

"That must be prevented at all hazards. But what says the duke?"

"He is as impenetrable as a rock. He says the fund cannot afford more than fifteen thousand at the very utmost. However, he advised me to apply to Mordecai."

"No hope then, I am afraid."

"Very little, my lord. I saw the Jew. He is ready to advance on good security."

"I thank him. Well, then, we have no alternative."

"I fear not, my lord. Cellini had given directions to his attorney to proceed to extremities. I prevailed on him to recall them. He will allow you one fortnight more, but not another day."

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"And Cartwright, and Jones, and Roberts, and Jenkinson?"

"I have seen them, with about a score besides, and have obtained a short delay from them all; but they are extremely angry."

"Scoundrels! their anger is my least concern. But how have you managed with Tewkesbury? You told him Maria's obstinacy."

"I did."

"How did he receive the story?"

"With a most violent paroxysm of rage. He threatened all kinds of vengeance, and hinted, in no very measured terms, that we had deceived him."

"We are in his power, or he would not have dared to make such an insinuation. I am at a loss to determine whether Tewkesbury be more of a villain or a coward. How did you pacify him? or is he pacified?"

"I was obliged to suggest our other scheme. I have told him all."

"You have told it, then! Sillary, what have you done? You have put me at his mercy."

"What could I do? he might have ruined you by a word."

"Well, then, the dye is cast. What said he?"

"Here is a letter from him. He is willing to run all hazards."

"So be it. I should be ashamed to show less courage than Tewkesbury in any matter. After all, I believe I run no great risk. If she be only kept out of the way till the marriage is over, I can trust to her affection for her silence *then*. The old man is dead. You are the only living witness, except *that other*. I wish I were certain about *him*. He stood in the shade. I did not see his face. But he saw mine."

"I assure you, my lord, you need be under no apprehension. He was a traveller who was there by mere accident. You were not named

in his presence, and I have ascertained that he has left the country."

"What is his name?"

"Thomson, my lord. John Thomson, a Canadian merchant."

"You told me his name was Johnson, Sillary. By Heavens! if you have deceived me in this matter—wretch! do you forget that your life is in my hands?"

"This violence is weak, my lord. I never can forget my obligations to your lordship. I have no interest to deceive you. John Johnson is the man's name. I meant to say Johnson. I can tell you his whole history, if you will."

"Well, well, I was wrong. I have found you faithful. What is this?—another letter?—from Maria, I see. Poor girl! we have made her miserable, and must make her more so. Should I answer it?"

"If I may offer you my advice, my lord, you

should answer it immediately. Write in a tone as penitent as you please, and assure her you have abandoned the design at which I hinted. We must restore her confidence in you, if possible."

The Marquis of Tewkesbury's letter was laconic enough. It was in the following terms:—

"MY LORD,

"You have broken our bargain. I have waited six months instead of two, and now Sillary tells me that the lady will not consent. To be plain with you, I do not think this is using me well. However, I have listened to your new scheme. It is a bold one, but I think must succeed. I am fool enough to be willing to marry the girl, and what more would she have?

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"TEWKESBURY."

After reading this letter, Lord William remained silent till they reached Wyaston-gate, and Sillary did not interrupt his reverie by any remarks, but, as they entered the avenue, the attorney suddenly seemed to recall something he had omitted to mention.

"It is necessary I should inform your lordship," said he, "that Lady Cordelia Hamilton is at present in this neighbourhood. I learned so accidentally from Mr. Hyde Clinton. She is on a visit at Devondale with her grand-niece Miss Hockly, of whom you have heard so much of late."

"Indeed!"

"Your lordship can best tell whether she is likely to know anything of the subject of which we have been speaking."

"I do not believe she is. Maria would not have divulged our secret to any one, without my consent. However, I thank you for the informa-

tion. It may be as well to keep out of her way. She might be troublesome, but she will not hear anything of my intentions till it be too late to interfere."

CHAPTER XXII.

"I have but with a cursorary eye
O'erglanced the articles."

Henry V.

Wyaston is, in every respect, a complete contrast to the ancient residence of the Cantilupes. The house was built by its present owner, and, while its magnificence sufficiently displays his enormous wealth, the character of its whimsical ornaments is no bad practical caricature of the strange extravagance of modern taste. It contains specimens of every known style of architecture, from the rich variety of the Gothic, to the graceful simplicity of the Grecian; from the

fragile and gaudy pavilion of China, to the heavy monotony of an Egyptian temple. The country, the age, and the purpose, of the hundred models from which it has been copied, have been equally neglected. The portico, which was meant to catch the mild breeze of the Levant, is open to the rude blast of the Atlantic; the dome, which should echo to the peal of the organ, rises above the battlement, which should be thronged with armed men; the obelisk of Sesostris, the arch of the Antonines, the tower of the Norman baron, minarets and cupolas, columns and spires, mingle in grotesque confusion.

Within, the character of the apartments is equally varied. From a vestibule, which pretends to be Grecian, you are conducted to the grand staircase, which is glaringly Egyptian. The ascent, formed of several small flights of stairs, with spacious landings between them, is lined with rows of gigantic sphinxes. After passing under a semicircular arch, which springs,

in the Saxon manner, from the capitals of two heavy columns, without architraves, you enter a spacious hall, in which the slender column and lancet arch of the days of Henry the Third are blended with the florid ornaments which prevailed in the days of the Tudors. On the one hand, there is the museum, which has some resemblance to an Indian pagoda; and on the other, the library, which is not unlike a Roman amphitheatre.

Meanwhile, the splendour of all these apartments is extreme. The blue-velvet drawing-room, the crimson-satin drawing-room, the golden pavilion, the armoury, the conservatory, the theatre, the chapel, the picture-gallery, the statue-gallery, the grand saloon, exhaust the imagination and fatigue the senses with an endless succession of gorgeous magnificence.

The grounds, the natural beauties of which require no aid from art, are filled with the most puerile and absurd ornaments. There is the grotto, a cave curiously decked with shells, pe-

trifactions, and fossils, and lighted by small windows of painted glass. There is the hermitage, containing an automaton, intended to represent a hermit, with a skull, hour-glass, and book. This automaton answers questions, and tells fortunes with wonderful politeness. There is the Naiad, an immense colossal statue, holding an urn under her arm, from which a torrent rushes over some broken pieces of rock. There is the Dutch cottage, built precisely in the style of the houses in New Holland, with a canal and a windmill painted in the true Dutch fashion. There is the Otaheitan hut, constructed of sticks and reeds, with plants from Otaheite round the door, and bows, idols, canoes, necklaces of shells, and caps of red feathers within.

The Earl of Brighton aspires to the reputation of possessing the most magnificent establishment of any British subject. Conscious that he cannot hope to be distinguished by his talents, and that

his birth adds very little lustre to his rank, he endeavours to surpass his brother peers by splendid equipages, and almost royal hospitality. He affects the character of a Mæcenas, without either taste to distinguish, or generosity to reward, the talents, to which he lends his countenance with all the haughty insolence of patronage. I have often thought that one might discover his ruling passions, no less in the style and ornaments of his residence, than in his tedious, vain, and pompous conversation. Whatever is costly and curious, whatever is difficult to procure, and impossible to replace, may be found there in abundance, but scarcely a single specimen of correct taste or superior genius. The walls of every room, for example, are covered with pictures, which have been selected for their antiquity or the singularity of their style, the worst productions of the infancy of the art, and the most elaborate pieces of grotesque and trifling artists,

but the works of the great masters are by no means displayed in equal profusion.

The countess has been also stricken with the disease of patronage. At various periods of her life she has patronized every art and science in the circle of human knowledge, and the constancy of her favour seems to be regulated by only one maxim, to encourage any dogma precisely as long as it lies under the unequivocal disapprobation of the public. The moment that it acquires the slightest popularity, her affection begins to cool. Her ladyship is religious at present, which is a severe satire on the irreligion of the age.

Lady Sophia's patronage is modestly confined to the stable and the dog-kennel, to which, from her infancy, her taste has been as constant as her mother's predilections are changeable. You will spare me the pain of describing, with any minuteness, her masculine person, rude manners, loud voice, and indelicate wit. Mimicry, sar-

casm, and even less feminine exhibitions of wit, interlarded with no small mixture of slang, make her whole conversation peculiarly disgusting.

Lady Cecilia patronizes actresses, actors, and artists. She is a very well-meaning, and not very unpleasant person, though the manner in which she dispenses her favours is sometimes not a little ostentatious.

Lady Sibilla Sefton is a *blue*. The character is well known, and needs no description. I use the word in its worst sense. She has read a little of everything, but has studied nothing deeply. Her limited information only serves to make her detested, for she never reads but as a preparation for conversation, and never converses but to display her knowledge. If we had time, it might be instructive to compare her character, in these respects, with that of another young lady, whom I have mentioned more than once already, and shal have occasion to mention again—Miss Ca-

roline Arnot. As to the rest, proud of her taste, and no less proud of her satire, her judgment in all literary matters is severe, but in every case a little skilful flattery may secure a more lenient criticism and liberal patronage.

Lord Wyaston, their brother, does not pretend to the dignity of a patron. He is not conceited, at least he makes no claim to talent of any kind. But he is, notwithstanding, the most insufferable young man I ever had the ill-fortune to encounter. It is his ambition to know the personal history of every human being with whom he comes into contact, no matter how insignificant. He will tell you why your chambermaid left her last place, and when your groom's grand-uncle was hanged. Nor is his noble thirst for knowledge satisfied with this. No fact is too minute or too trivial for his capacious memory. He can tell you the exact number of lamp-posts in the city of London, and how many kittens came

into the world last year in the parish of St. George's, Westminster. These important inquiries he dignifies with the name of statistical studies.

CHAPTER XXIII.

" The gentleman is learned, and a most rare speaker
To nature none more bound; his training such,
That he may furnish and instruct great teachers,
And never seek for aid out of himself."

Henry VIII.

THE harmony of Lord Brighton's family is by no means unbroken. At this time its dissensions had risen to a very formidable height. His lordship, who superintends the minutest details of his establishment, had determined that a ball should be given before the family returned to town, to which the whole county was invited. Lady Cecilia had prevailed on her father to permit it to be a fancy ball, and the amusements of the evening were to conclude with private

theatricals. The countess, being methodistical this winter, declared, in no very measured terms, her abhorrence of such improprieties, and her determination not to give them any countenance by her presence. In this resolution she was strengthened by the support which she received from Lady Deborah Dacre, a near relation of the family.

Lady Deborah was once the gayest of the gay, if not the naughtiest of the naughty. Living ever on the verge of that line, which to approach is a noble daring, that may raise a woman to the first step in the innumerable prudes of fashion, which to cross is an inexpiable crime, that must hurl her from the topmost pinnacle of influence and fame, she, of all women, the inexperienced would have said, was least likely to die a methodist. But the very reasons which would have induced this conclusion in the inexperienced, would have led a man, who knows the world, to expect that such would be the termination of her

career. She was not formed for an old age of cards, she was not formed for the mere *matronage* of fashion; she had a heart, unsatisfied by the homage of two generations, unfrozen by the snows of nearly fifty winters. For such a woman what refuge was there but methodism? that system, or rather *habit*, of worship, which presumes to approach the altar with the turbid emotions and impure language of earthly affection. And this men call religion! Much prostituted word! While some seek, in the barren speculations of an intellect as proud as it is feeble, that contemplation of his Maker which is the true end of man's existence—while others dream they have found it in the drunken enthusiasm of unbridled passion—why will so few remember, that it is written, by His unerring wisdom, "with all thy heart, *and* with all thy mind?"

The countess and Lady Deborah are recent

converts to those mad and presumptuous heresies, the disciples of which have the folly to predict the speedy approach of the Millennium, and the wickedness to support the credit of the prediction, in some cases, by pretended miracles.

While the Arleston party was on its way to Wyaston, Lady Deborah was engaged in relating the particulars of a miracle which had been lately wrought on a young lady in the neighbourhood, by a divine of their persuasion. Such a striking proof of the truth of their creed both the old ladies thought ought to justify their opposition to the reckless and unchristian gaieties which his lordship had in contemplation.

"I assure you, I have it from the best authority," said her ladyship. "I am particularly acquainted with Miss Hockly; and I have seen three persons, of undoubted veracity, who were present at this peculiar interposition of Divine power and favour."

"She had a medical adviser, doubtless," observed Lady Sibilla; "may I ask, was he a person of skill?"

"My own surgeon, Mr. Seton, has been in constant attendance upon her since the month of August, 1820. In that month, it pleased God to visit her with a hip disease. Perfect rest was recommended by him as absolutely necessary, and he also advised cupping and blistering. Since that time all manner of remedies have been tried. Leeches, blisters, change of air, warm sea-bathing, every thing, in short, which the skill and experience of the most celebrated physicians could suggest. For more than ten years, notwithstanding, she had not been able to walk across a room. For many months, indeed, she had not put her foot to the ground. It was on the tenth day of last month, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, that this great wonder was wrought in Israel."

"You have not told us the particulars."

"I would not willingly speak of these things to any one who has not learned to treat them with reverence. You smile, Lady Sibilla. Oh, take example from your excellent mother! The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

"Believe me, Lady Deborah, I am most willing to be convinced, if you can show me proper evidence. But, I candidly confess, that objection of Hume has never been answered to my satisfaction. He argues ——"

"Of Hume!" exclaimed the countess: "do you not blush to mention the name of that arch-infidel? But indeed, why should I be surprised? Is it not written that the prince of the powers of the air shall prevail for a season? 'Well,' says that godly man, to whom God has given a double portion of the spirit, 'some I offend, whom I would fain not offend, if, not offending them, I might please my Lord. But, to avoid his displeasure, I must hate father and mother, brother

and sister, wife or husband, son or daughter, yea, and my own life also, with a perfect hatred.' "

" By heavens ! Lady Brighton," said the earl, " this is too much. Of all your whims, this is the most absurd, and the most insufferable. If you do not choose to be present at the ball, do as you please; but a ball there shall be and a play too, whatever you may say to the contrary."

" And if Sally Hockly has been cured of her lameness," whispered Lady Sophia, " the best proof she can give of the miracle is to open the ball with my brother."

At this moment the Arleston party was seen driving up the avenue. Lady Deborah was the first to recognise it, and, much to the surprise of the countess, who had expected her company all that evening, she immediately rose, in some confusion, and took her leave.

" What has frightened Lady Deborah away so soon ?" said Lady Cecilia. " There is nothing very terrible in the Arleston people, as far as I

know; but they no sooner caught her eye, than she seemed anxious to get away."

"I think I could resolve that mystery," said Lady Sophia, with an expression which she wished to appear particularly sly.

"Is she acquainted with the duke's family?"

"She knows *Lord William*, at all events. Ill-natured people whisper she once knew him *too well.*"

"She is a foolish woman," replied Lady Sibilla, in a subdued tone, not intended for her mother's ear. "Miss Hockly's cure may be easily accounted for, without the hypothesis of a miracle, the most unphilosophical of all suppositions. From her own statement it is evident that no disorganization had taken place, for chronic irritation may exist, as in this case, without producing disorganization. No mention is made in her account of abscesses, or of the early elongation and final shortening of the limb. Depend upon it, the disease had not advanced to

the ulterior stage of disorganization. My opinion upon the whole facts is simply this: the disorder consisted in muscular weakness, aided by a debility of the function of volition. Now we all know that the force of enthusiasm, operating upon an intellect naturally feeble—"

This learned dissertation was interrupted by the arrival of the visitors.

As Miss Turnbull's name was announced with the others, Lady Sophia whispered to her brother—

"Who is Miss Turnbull, Wyaston—you, who know every body?"

"My dear Sophy," replied the viscount in the same tone, "I will give you five thousand guineas to tell me who Miss Turnbull is. I have ascertained that her mother sold apples at Bristol, but my utmost exertions have been insufficient to trace the family any further."

As Lord William had predicted, Lady Sophia

received his inquiries on the subject of the accident with infinite scorn.

"Hurt, my lord!" said she: "why, I reckon on ten such falls, on an average, every week of my life. No, I assure you, I was neither hurt nor frightened, though I suspect I know somebody whose nerves were not a little shaken."

"Alarmed for *your* safety, Lady Sophia, I cannot deny it."

"My safety, indeed! no, my good friend, the safety of your own proper person. I never saw a man so pale in my life."

"You are too severe, Sophy," said Lady Cecilia. "You first put his lordship's neck into danger, and then laugh at him for disliking his situation."

"Quite a mistake, I assure you. Never drove better in my life. Had them tight in hand too. I flatter myself I am a pretty safe whip, for I never killed but one old woman in my life. It was that silly little fool, Flora Macdonald—"

"And so it was Miss Macdonald who waved the handkerchief, after all," cried Harry Mowbray. "You have no notion, Lady Sophia, what a mystery his lordship made about the matter. Are you acquainted with the young lady?"

"Not in the least—have not that honour. But Lord William seems to be on very intimate terms with the whole family."

"Of course," said Lady Rothsay, interposing, and hastening to change the conversation, "my brother is on intimate terms with the whole county, for the present, and, moreover, I am obliged to be so too. We must know everybody, which really is no very easy matter. By the way, does anybody know anything about those Pierrepoints, whom the Clintons make such a noise about?"

"I can tell you their whole history," said the viscount, pompously. "Tom Pierrepoint is the second son of a colonel in the army. I dare say

your Ladyship recollects old Shepherd the banker, who committed forgery, and ran away to America —singular man—your ladyship must remember him—if I am not mistaken, the Earl of Rothsay lost three thousand two hundred and fifty-four pounds on that occasion; I have a memorandum of the amount somewhere. Well, Shepherd was Tom Pierrepoint's uncle, and, at his death, he left him a small estate in Virginia. I have ascertained that the estate was sold for nineteen thousand four hundred pounds, beside the expense of deeds, which is a trifle in that country. Pierrepoint had not a sixpence in the world when his uncle died, and, by my calculation, he has been spending between two and three thousand a-year ever since; so he must soon get into difficulties."

"Upon my word, you surprise me," said Mowbray: "my impression was that he was a rich old miser."

"If you will permit me, I flatter myself I can

satisfy you I am right. I speak on the very best authority. In the first place, there can be no doubt, that, at his uncle's death, Mr. Pierrepoint was a beggar. The fact was notorious. In the next place, if you are at all dubious about the price of the Virginian estate, I have letters from America, in my possession, which establish the point beyond dispute—one from a fifth cousin of the purchaser, and another from the brother-in-law of the principal clerk of the attorney who was employed on the occasion. Lastly, I think I can prove pretty clearly that Pierrepoint's annual expenditure for some years has not been much under three thousand pounds; but, in order to do this, I must enter a little more into detail. I conclude nothing but on the very best authority. Skelton the butler has forty pounds wages. He told me so himself last week, and I believe him implicitly. Skelton is a Somersetshire man. I know his father well—a tenant of

Lord Thurvaston. Well—that 's forty. Then Dick Sewall, the coachman, he has—"

"I beg pardon, my lord," interrupted Harry, who had listened with dismay to this exordium. "I beg pardon, but I have not the slightest doubt your lordship is correct."

"You must not forget to visit Ambresbury, however," said Lady Rothsay to her brother: "the Pierrepoints have some small influence, I understand, and they really have been very civil."

"Oh, I know the kind of civility exactly," said Lady Sophia, "and I could tell you what it means too, if I chose."

"Why, what should it mean but good-will to the family and to the cause?"

"Pooh! pooh! If Lord William were not a bachelor—now do not blush, my lord—if Lord William were not a bachelor, or *my daughter Ann* had been successful in any of her thousand

and one desperate attempts to get a husband—but no matter. Do you remember little Ann, my lord?" continued she, mimicking Mrs. Pierrepoint's manner: "do you remember little Ann? We used to call her your little wife, when you were children. You really must pay us a visit at Ambresbury, and renew your acquaintance with little Ann.—Now is not that Mrs. Pierrepoint to the life? But do not be too much flattered, my lord. She has said the same thing to half the bachelors of the county, and little Ann has been the little wife of every unmarried young gentleman within fifty miles of Ambresbury."

"You should not be so hard on our friend, Mrs. Pierrepoint," said Lady Sibilla. "It is a very amiable weakness, and really in some things she is not totally deficient in common sense. And then my dear friend, Ann Pierrepoint, has many good qualities, I assure you; though I admit

she is no great beauty, and is silly and affected enough."

"I am sure I do not dispute her good qualities, but you must allow she is a fool."

"There was a time, I candidly confess, when I was weak enough to despise a woman without talent, but of late I have often envied Ann Pierrepoint. How much truth there is in those beautiful lines of our immortal bard! Lord William, you recollect the passage—pray correct me if I go wrong—my memory is so wretched:—

'In parts superior, what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?
'Tis but to know how little can be known,
To see all others' faults, and feel our own:
Condemn'd in business, or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge.
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land:
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.'

Are these the words? I am sure of the sentiment."

"I have no doubt your ladyship is as correct as usual. I would give the world for your ladyship's memory."

"Indeed, you flatter; but such lines are not easily forgotten. What I lament in my poor friend, Miss Pierrepoint, is not so much her ignorance of more abstruse subjects, as her total helplessness in the ordinary affairs of life. For what says our English Homer?

> 'That not to know at large of things remote
> From use, obscure, and subtle, but to know
> That which before us lies in daily life
> Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
> Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
> And renders us, in things that most concern,
> Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.'

There is a passage in Cowper which expresses the same thought very elegantly, if I could but

recall it—but my poor memory—positively it grows worse every day—

'Knowledge and wisdom—'

how does it run? pray assist me, my lord; I know you could, if you would:

'Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-times no connexion. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom, in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.
Knowledge is proud, that he has learn'd so much!
Wisdom is humble, that he knows no more.'

I must say I entirely coincide with these sentiments. Learning, when it is carried beyond a certain point, unfits us for the ordinary business of life. Above all, what can be more unbecoming in *our* sex. We have domestic duties, which claim our first, perhaps should occupy our whole attention,

'—— to know no more'

is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise."

"You argue so admirably, that the strangest paradox becomes probable, when your ladyship defends it; but surely your observations apply only to ordinary women—we need not go far to meet with an instance, in which learning, the most extensive and profound, is united with all that is most amiable in woman."

"Pretty strong, I think," whispered Harry Mowbray to Lady Burlington. "She must be very blind, if she does not see that his lordship is mocking her."

"Oh, no danger, I assure you. Her vanity is as blind as it is insatiable."

The conversation on the subject of the miracle, which had been interrupted by the arrival of the Arleston party, was here renewed by the Countess of Brighton. And in spite of all Lady Rothsay's manœuvres, a very warm controversy commenced on the subject. It required all her

ladyship's tact to avoid offence to either side. She was successful, however, as indeed she always is successful, and left an impression on every one to whom she directed her conversation, that she was a convert to his or her opinion. Flattery, of the most delicate kind, is the instrument by which she wins her way to every heart. It is impossible to praise too highly the perfection of art which she displays on such occasions—the apparent ease with which she conducts the most intricate intrigue—the consummate acting with which she assumes an air of warmth and sincerity, most foreign to her natural character.

She gradually led the way to her real object in the visit.

"Miss Hockly was at Devondale house, I believe, when this wonderful cure was effected?"

"She was," said Lady Brighton, "in the company of her grand-aunt, Lady Cordelia Hamilton. The blindness of our fallen nature was

never more apparent than in the obstinacy with which her ladyship and Mrs. Arnot, who were both witnesses of the miracle, harden their hearts against this mighty work of God."

"I was not aware that Lady Cordelia Hamilton was in England. I did not know that she was acquainted with the Arnots."

"Then you do not know that they are related. You have not heard Mrs. Arnot's history," said Lord Wyaston.

"I have not."

"I have it from the best authority, though I never heard it till yesterday. You cannot remember Miss Caroline Hamilton, a celebrated beauty in her day, who married the late Lord Tudor. It is many years ago, but you must have heard the story. There was an elopement and a divorce. Lady Tudor was then very young. She went abroad, and was forgotten. Well. The pious Mrs. Arnot is that very Caroline Hamilton, and Lady Cordelia's cousin-ger-

man. I have it from the best authority, a letter from my friend, Hyde Clinton, who is intimately acquainted with the family."

"There must be some mistake, my lord. Clinton must be mistaken. The story is quite incredible: at all events, it is really cruel to repeat it. Mrs. Arnot conducts herself with great propriety, and Lady Tudor's faults, even if she be Lady Tudor, should be forgotten. Let us remember she has a daughter. Besides, I am confident there is some mistake."

The pain and anxiety which Mowbray betrayed at this moment would have drawn the attention of the company, if it had not been diverted by Lady Rothsay, who no sooner observed him change colour, than she rose to take leave.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, trembles in his."

Doge of Venice—Byron.

THE Countess of Rothsay next morning allowed herself to be surprised by Miss Turnbull, in the act of reading a most elaborate eulogium on Harry Mowbray, by an opposition journalist. He was celebrated by the hireling, according to directions which her ladyship had communicated expressly for the purpose, as the most promising statesman of the age, and already, though almost a boy in years, the most brilliant ornament of the senate. By turns, the variety and

depth of his acquirements, the poignancy of his wit, and the splendour of his eloquence, were made the theme of the most exaggerated praise.

The countess looked up with a slight start, admirably feigned, as the young lady, laying her hand on the newspaper, inquired what interested her so deeply.

" Only see," said she, " how much nonsense they write about our friend Mowbray. We must positively put this out of his way, or he will be made a coxcomb for life. The man is clever enough, I dare say, but this picture is really over coloured."

The heiress read the passage without making any observation. The countess, who watched her closely, with an air, however, the most indifferent in the world, augured well from her silence, and with her usual tact, immediately introduced a new subject.

" Is there any hope that your uncle will be

able to pay us a visit, while we are in this part of the country, my dear Margaret?"

"I expect a visit from him this morning."

"This morning!" exclaimed the countess, in a tone in which an acute observer might have detected no inconsiderable alarm.

"Yes; this morning, Lady Rothsay. I told you—that is, I thought I had mentioned his intention. He arrived at Fairhaven last week."

"I am so delighted! This is indeed an unexpected pleasure. How could you forget to tell me he was so near us? He is paying court to the shopkeepers of Fairhaven, I presume, in the prospect of a dissolution."

"I really know very little about his motions. You are aware I am but a poor politician, and he is wise enough not to trust me with his secrets."

John Turnbull, the subject of this conversation, is a rich merchant in the town of Fairhaven. No one presumes to calculate the amount of his

wealth, but all admit that it is enormous. His brother, Miss Turnbull's father, left her a very considerable property, but it is her expectations from her uncle, which have obtained for her the character of the greatest heiress in the three kingdoms. John Turnbull is a bachelor, and with the exception of his niece, has not a single known, or at least acknowledged, relation. Born and educated in the town of Fairhaven, it was the first object of his ambition, from the moment he began to be considered wealthy, to represent his native city in Parliament. At three successive elections he was an unsuccessful candidate. His rival, Stephen Arnot, is the representative of an old family in the town, which, for several generations, has devoted itself to commerce. During the reigns of George the Second and George the Third, a member of this family, alternately with one of Harry Mowbray's ancestors, who, like the Arnots, were merchants in the same place, and steady Whigs, was uni-

formly elected. Latterly the interest of the Mowbrays declined, with the fall of their fortunes, and Stephen Arnot had no opposition, except from Turnbull.

It was in this situation of affairs, that the vigilant eye of the Countess of Rothsay detected the advantage which would accrue to her party from an alliance between Turnbull's niece and a member of the Mowbray family, who, although a renegade from their principles, still retained considerable influence in the town by the popularity of his manners, no less than by the force of old recollections.

With this view, among others (for I do not pretend to have discovered all her motives), she had brought Miss Turnbull and Harry Mowbray together, but hitherto, as I have already hinted, she had been more successful with the lady than with the intended bridegroom. Perhaps there were reasons for this, which may appear more clearly in the sequel. In the meantime, it

neither suited Lady Rothsay's views, nor was agreeable to her vanity, that the heiress's uncle, who was a confidant of her scheme, should be aware that its success had been only partial. John Turnbull was a coarse but shrewd and cunning man, whom she knew it would be extremely difficult to deceive. Accordingly, it is not wonderful that she should have felt anything but pleasure in the prospect of a visit from him, while Harry was still at Arleston.

Her ladyship's talents in the higher branches of diplomacy are universally admitted, but she deserves equal admiration for her dexterity in the more humble, but not less difficult diplomacy of private life. Her inexhaustible contrivances, and above all, her unembarrassed readiness in the most unexpected difficulties, transcend conception. Before Miss Turnbull had well finished her disclosure of her uncle's intentions, Lady Rothsay had formed one plot to postpone the visit, another to hasten Mow-

bray's departure, and a third to cover the two first, more intricate than either. On the present occasion, however, her genius was exerted in vain. Their conversation was interrupted by Mr. Turnbull's arrival.

The countess observed his carriage, while it was still at a considerable distance from the castle, and rising hastily, without announcing his approach to his niece, she went in quest of Mowbray. She found him in the library.

" Mr. Mowbray," said she, " I am going to make a most particular request. I see old Turnbull of Fairhaven's carriage at the door, and he will be in the drawing-room in two minutes. Now I am afraid his niece may be so thoughtless as to repeat, in his presence, the story we heard yesterday about Miss Arnot's mother. Turnbull is a very kind good-natured creature, but a little fond of scandal, and besides, he is not on the best terms with the Arnots, and if he gets hold of the story, it will be all

over Fairhaven before night. The Devondale people, though our next neighbours, have certainly behaved in a very rude manner to us, and I confess I have no great liking for them; but I should be sorry to hurt their feelings by giving unnecessary publicity to an anecdote, which I am afraid is only too true. Will you have the goodness to look for Miss Turnbull, and request her in my name, or in your own, which, perhaps, will be more effectual, to say nothing on the subject to the old gentleman?"

Whatever Mowbray's reasons might be, he certainly displayed the greatest possible alacrity in obeying Lady Rothsay's commands, though, on most occasions, he was not particularly anxious for a *tête à tête* with Miss Turnbull.

"You will find the young lady in the music-room, I believe," said the countess: "pray stay with her till I come, I wish to introduce you to her uncle."

"My Lady Rothsay, your most obedient,"

said Mr. Turnbull, entering as Mowbray left the room. "You see I have made you out at last. And how are all our little plans going on? How are you managing my niece and the nation?"

"Admirably, my dear sir, admirably, I assure you, but I should have been the better of your advice now and then. Why have you postponed your visit so long?"

"Could not have been at Arleston one hour sooner, upon my honour, my lady. Had my brutes at Fairhaven to smoothe down. But here I am at last; and, please God, I do not mean to leave you till two persons, who shall be nameless, are man and wife."

"Delightful!" exclaimed the countess, concealing her dismay. "With your assistance, I hope we may be enabled to overcome the reluctance of the bride, and prevail on her to fix an early day."

"Oh! if it rests with her, she shall fix what

day I please. Has the young man made an offer then?"

"Why, not exactly, I believe, sir; but any one may see that his affections are engaged. We must have some patience. These things cannot be brought about in a day."

"You know best, my lady; you know best. I see no use, for my own part, in shilly-shallying about it. But, you know best; I was never married, thank God!"

The countess led the way to the music-room.

"Where can these young people have hidden themselves?" said she, as she passed from one drawing-room to another, pretending to look for them. "We shall find them together, I have no doubt. And here," continued she, opening the door of the music-room softly, "here they are, in earnest dispute as usual. I wonder, Mr. Turnbull, what they find to say to one another."

Mowbray and the heiress were sitting with

their backs to the door, and did not observe the countess as she entered. The language of the gentleman was obviously that of entreaty.

"I am afraid," whispered Lady Rothsay, "I am afraid our interruption is not well-timed; but it is too late to retreat."

Though, at first, a little annoyed by this visit, the countess, if the truth were known, did not find it entirely disagreeable. The greater her difficulties the more disembarrassed the countenance with which they are opposed, and I suspect she is seldom more happy than when she has most occasion to exert talents for intrigue. These talents are certainly distinguished, but they have one defect. She has too much art. She cannot keep the straight road, even where there are no obstacles in the way. In the wanton exuberance of genius, she overloads her plots and multiplies her stratagems without reason and without end. She manœuvres in the merest trifles, and perils

that character of sincerity, which she earnestly affects, for objects too worthless to repay the risk.

Mr. Turnbull had a quarrel with the Cantilupes. There was no necessity that the countess should pretend to dislike them likewise. She might have some reason to be jealous of Waltheof's visits to Arleston for another reason, but she ran no little hazard of offending the family by manœuvring to prevent them, while the heiress and her uncle continued at the castle.

Her plot required that she should conceal Mowbray's indifference to the young lady, but it did not require the thousand insignificant tricks, by which she endeavoured to represent him in the character of an ardent lover. For example, Mowbray had written some gallant compliments, in that smooth, epigrammatic style, for which he is so celebrated in her ladyship's album. Perhaps the countess herself was the

heroine addressed, perhaps some fair creation of the poet's brain, but assuredly Miss Turnbull had nothing to do with their conception. It was quite unnecessary, and not a little imprudent, to produce them as evidence of the pretended passion.

Lady Rothsay acted with still greater imprudence when she authorized Sillary, and his instrument Thistleton, to spread a report in Fairhaven, that Mowbray was to be married to Mr. Turnbull's niece, and seemed to have forgotten all her caution, in actually allowing them to canvass some of the leading citizens, on Mr. Turnbull's behalf, in Mowbray's name.

In a word, this female Machiavel was not exempt, on this occasion, from the faults into which her sex is most liable to fall when it indulges in intrigue. In dissimulation, in self-possession, in artlessness of manner, and delicacy of innuendo, no man may hope to rival a female

politician. But that sanguine temper, and that minute attention to trifles, which are the secret of her power, are also, not unfrequently, the cause of her defeat.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Know then that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes."

Doge of Venice—Byron.

SILLARY had announced his intention of returning to town before the election, and Mowbray had gone in search of him to request him to execute some trifling commission.

The attorney was not to be found, he had left Arleston by the night coach, the evening before.

"Your friend is a very strange person," said Mowbray, addressing Lord William. "His movements seem to be as unaccountable as his acquaintances."

"I understand your allusion," replied his lordship, "and if you will step this way, out of sight of that fool Horace Hopkins, whom I see coming up the avenue with the count, I will explain that little mystery, in which you seem to take so deep an interest.

"Mowbray," continued he, "I confess I have been to blame in this matter. I was wrong to keep any thing secret from you; but I am convinced of my error, and am ready to make every atonement in my power. Your good sense must have told you long ago, that if we are to be guided by those old fools who direct every thing in the conservative committee, we are playing a desperate game. All that talk about vested rights, and the principles of the Constitution, is very well out of doors—tells admirably, that is, at a Pitt dinner, and brings down immense cheering from the opposition benches. But really these old gentlemen are in their dotage, to suppose that we can turn out any

ministry by such miserable twaddle. And then the fund, to which they so reluctantly contributed, is doled out with such wretched and short-sighted parsimony, that it is worse than useless. I call their parsimony short-sighted, for nothing can be more certain, than that if the whigs carry a sweeping measure of parliamentary reform at this moment, they and their friends will be excluded from all political power, for a century at least, if not for ever. To be sure, it is not a matter of life and death with them, as it is with us. I am amused by the philosophical stoicism with which such men as the Duke of Cornwall can resign the good things of Downing-street, after he and his ancestors have fattened to repletion on the public money. Poor fellows, like you and me, are not quite so stoical. And there are others also, men of greater wealth and influence, who are equally dissatisfied with the inactivity, the parsimony, the dissensions, and the conscientious scruples of the Committee. In

short, before I left town, I had several interviews, not only with many of our own friends, but with various merchants and colonial proprietors, whose opinions entirely coincided with my own, and the result has since been the formation of a party, small indeed in numbers, but resolute and thorough-going, upon which, I confess, I place considerable reliance. There is no occasion for any ostensible separation from the rest of the opposition. We may attend their meetings at Lancaster House, or wherever they may be held, as usual; but we have our own plans, and whatever dissensions may arise, we will stick together. We owe a great deal to Sillary, for his activity in the organization of the club, and still more for what he has already done, in carrying the measures which it has recommended into execution. We must not be nice in the tools we employ, so that we use them cautiously; and Sillary has found the right instruments, and manages them with admirable prudence and dexterity.

You have the secret, and in return you must not refuse to join us. I was a fool to believe for a moment that we could do without you, though you must see, from the nature of our objects, that the fewer who are let into the secret the better. However, Mowbray, I have no wish to entrap you into any thing you may regret, and so I will tell you, in a few words, what we mean to do.

"In order to do any thing, the first requisite is *unanimity*. Since the opposition was formed, it has been unanimous on no one measure. That error I do not think we are likely to fall into, for a very plain reason. We have one great object in common, and we have the good sense to make no mystery to one another about the matter. *The whigs must be turned out.* If reform can be prevented altogether, so much the better. If the ruinous principles upon which they came into power can be brought into discredit, I, for one, shall rejoice most heartily.

But in the first place, and at all hazards, the whigs must be turned out. To accomplish this object, we are ready to pledge ourselves to a modified reform, to retrenchment, to peace, to free trade, in short, to any thing or every thing. When our friends have got the power into their own hands, we may explain our pledges as we please. The people must be treated as children. We must not scruple to deceive them a little, if necessary for their good.

"What the precise nature of this reform bill may be, I do not pretend to know, for, to give the ministry their due, they have preserved an admirable secresy on the subject. But they cannot please all parties, and, in all likelihood, by endeavouring to do so, they will offend all, or at least afford us an opportunity for the most opposite accusations.

"In the mean time, we have turned our very ignorance to account. The public has been led to suspect the sincerity of the cabinet from its

silence. To-day, men say that the measure is to throw all power into the hands of the aristocracy, by extending the franchise to their tenants—to-morrow, that it is to annihilate the influence of property: to-day, that it is so partial, as to be totally inefficient—to-morrow, that its provisions are designedly so extreme, that it must be thrown out by acclamation. Whatever it may be, we have prepared the public mind to receive it with distrust. Our enemies are numerous and powerful, but we are *united*, and, if I am not very much mistaken, we are certain of success.

"Here is a list of the club—few men of great personal influence you may probably imagine, few men of talent; but I am much mistaken if we have not done more, and are not likely to do more, than all the other tories in England. There is Tewkesbury, for example; a ruined man, you will say; not an acre left, but a barren rock in the west of Ireland, which he has no power to sell. Danby, Emond, Delamere, ruined gam-

blers if you will, but, the more desperate their affairs, the more ardent their support. Men, not destitute of abilities, of good rank and connexions, known to every body, listened to by every body; let me tell you, they are not to be despised. Then, if you look for talent, Hyde Clinton has genius for any undertaking; and, if you want wealth, what think you of your friend John Turnbull, the great West India proprietor, and the richest banker in Fairhaven? There are others too; glance over the list. I think you will be satisfied that I have some ground to expect that we shall be successful. Now, no answer for the present, Mowbray: take time to make up your mind. Think coolly of the matter. I will speak of it again to-morrow.

"In the mean time, let us talk of another subject. You have been quizzing me a good deal lately about a certain young lady; do not be offended if I take my revenge, by alluding to another Miss Turnbull."

"By your leave, my lord," interrupted Harry, "you have given me enough to think of for one evening. Let us postpone the other subject till another day. May I trouble you for a loan of that list? I will return it to-morrow."

"Take it, Mowbray, and let me hope to see your name added to it before it is returned. But, to revert to Miss Turnbull. I do not wish to meddle with what does not concern me, but, if you take my advice, you will not pay so many visits to Devondale House. Believe me, the young lady is not a little jealous."

"My lord, upon that subject, I really must insist on not entering at present, either in jest or earnest."

"As you please, Mowbray, as you please. It is no business of mine. I speak for your own sake. Am I to understand that I shall have your answer to my proposal to-morrow?"

Mowbray bowed, and they separated.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Oh love! how are thy precious, sweetest minutes
Thus ever cross'd, thus vex'd with disappointments!
Now pride, now fickleness, fantastic quarrels,
And sullen coldness, give us pain by turns."

Rowe.

About half an hour after this interview, Mowbray found himself at a little wicket which leads from the grounds of Arleston into those of Devondale.

Stephen Arnot, of Devondale House, is the duke's nearest neighbour, but there is little intercourse between their families. Arnot is a stanch whig, of whig descent, and he abominates the duke as a tory, a courtier, and an aristocrat. His grandfather, his father, and himself have

been, for more than half a century, the most considerable merchants in the neighbouring town of Fairhaven, which, during the greater part of that time, they have represented in parliament.

"Not at home, Mr. Mowbray," said a gray-headed servant, who opened the door.

"What, Benson, still as fresh as ever?" answered Harry, slipping a purse into the old man's hand. "I am very unfortunate to miss the family so often. I shall not see Mrs. Arnot this season, for I leave Arleston in a day or two, and I suppose she does not intend to be in town."

"Had not you better return through the garden, sir?" said Benson, slily putting the purse into his pocket. "The grass is damp. You recollect the shrubbery, Mr. Mowbray. The shrubbery is the nearest way."

In the shrubbery, Mowbray was not surprised to overtake Caroline Arnot.

There is no denying that Miss Arnot, though

very far from being ugly, is decidedly plain; but no man ever conversed with her for half an hour without forgetting the imperfections of her face and person. She is an only child, and both her parents have devoted the greater part of their time to her education. She has read much, and thought deeply, but her natural good sense has taught her that art, so valuable to both sexes, but doubly valuable to a woman, to conceal her knowledge. You might be intimately acquainted with her for years without discovering that she is an excellent Greek scholar, and no contemptible mathematician.

She received Mowbray with an air of haughty coldness.

"I have waited on you," said he, "to be honoured with your commands: I leave Arleston on Saturday."

"You are very kind, sir. I have no occasion to trouble you, for my father returns to London next week."

"Is there any hope that you may be in town yourself this season?"

"I have no such intention, sir, at present."

"This, then, Miss Arnot, is my last opportunity for an explanation in which my happiness is very deeply interested. I fear I have incurred your father's displeasure, and, perhaps, your own, in consequence of a misunderstanding which, if you will permit me, I am confident I can remove."

"Mr. Mowbray, you must pardon me, you are entering on a subject with which I have nothing to do; and, allow me to add, in which I take very little interest."

"Have I then the misfortune to have lost your friendship, Miss Arnot? Believe me, I can explain my conduct——"

"Excuse me, sir. I have not the presumption to express an opinion on your conduct, and, in one word, I must repeat, that I have neither

leisure nor inclination to pursue this subject any further."

"Caroline, we are old friends, and we must not part in this manner. There have even been moments——"

"Mr. Mowbray, since you compel me to speak harshly, you have yourself to blame. Our friendship is at an end. When I heard you accused of ingratitude to others, and of private as well as public dishonesty, I shut my eyes to the accusation; but, to your base and deceitful conduct towards my dear father, I could not be blind. I pray God to enable me to forgive you, but our friendship is at an end. And now, sir, that you know my sentiments, you must pardon me for terminating an interview, obtained by what I am unwilling to characterize as an insolent intrusion."

Harry Mowbray was left an orphan at five years of age, heir to an estate once the most

considerable in the county, but so burdened, in consequence of his father's losses in trade, that, on coming of age, he found it expedient to bring it to sale. Stephen Arnot was his guardian, and in his house he spent the greater part of his minority. A friendship, formed in his childhood, between Harry and Miss Arnot, warmed as they grew older into a mutual passion. In many respects their characters were suited to one another, and, in their intended union, under the sanction, as it was believed, of her father, the politicians of Fairhaven, the whigs of the county, and, above all, Mowbray's numerous creditors, foresaw a most convenient arrangement.

One objection, indeed, might have occurred to Mowbray's friends if they had known all the circumstances—an objection, allow me to remark in passing, most unjust and preposterous, though countenanced by the prejudices of no small portion of the English public. Caroline Arnot's

mother was the divorced wife of a British peer. Deserted by the man with whom she left her first husband's house, at an age, which, of itself, might have been considered an extenuation of her crime, she resided many years in Italy under a borrowed name, and in the strictest seclusion. After she became Stephen Arnot's wife, few people knew the early part of her history. Mowbray himself had never heard the story till it was dragged under his notice by the manœuvres of Hyde Clinton and Lady Rothsay.

The intended marriage was prevented by other means. Ambition is Mowbray's besetting sin. A seat in parliament, and the prospect of ministerial patronage, were bribes sufficient to detach him from those principles in which he had been educated. The open and shameless manner in which he deserted his former friends irritated old Arnot, a man of keen feelings and obstinate rectitude beyond expression. He broke

off all intercourse with Mowbray. But Caroline's heart was not so easily lost. She continued to permit her lover's visits, unknown to her father, and trusted that time would overcome the prejudices he had imbibed.

Recently, however, *her* manner, also, had been changed, and, for some weeks, Mowbray had found it impossible to procure an interview. He attributed her displeasure to an altercation which had occurred in the House of Commons, in the course of which he had been brought into collision with her father, and had allowed himself to use expressions, in the heat of debate, of which he heartily repented in his cooler moments. But, in truth, her coldness had a different cause. She had been led to believe that under the mask of friendship he had long been engaged in a scheme to undermine her father's influence in Fairhaven, and, perhaps, although she might not confess it to herself, her indignation at his

duplicity was not lessened by the motive which was assigned for his conduct. That motive was said to be his approaching marriage to the daughter of her father's rival.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Since Fortune's wrath envieth the wealth
Wherein I reigned, by the sight
Of that that fed my eyes by stealth
With sour, sweet, dread, and delight;
Let not my grief move you to moan,
For I will weep and wail alone.

Earl of Surrey.

On the following morning Waltheof de Cantilupe was announced. He could not have chosen a less opportune occasion for his visit. Miss Turnbull was no longer in the humour of listening to his addresses, and indeed found great difficulty in concealing her feelings in the prospect of his rival's departure from Arleston.

"Have you brought the drawings for Miss Turnbull?" said Lady Burlington, the moment she saw Waltheof. "I have been so anxious

to see them, for I want to choose a head-dress too."

The antiquarian's manner had hitherto exhibited more than his usual bashfulness, for, in the conversation which had preceded Lady Burlington's entrance, Miss Turnbull had confined herself to the most cold and distant politeness. In fact, after a few ordinary and unmeaning remarks, she had scarcely looked at poor Waltheof. However, when, in answer to Lady Burlington's question, he produced some very elaborate drawings of ancient English costumes, and offered them for her selection, she could not avoid saying something by way of thanks. But the careless and almost contemptuous manner in which her acknowledgments were expressed, appeared to cut the unhappy antiquarian to the heart.

"And what may be the name of this ugly cowl?" said the heiress, "did you ever see any thing so frightful?"

"That is the *coverchief*, or *kerchef*," answered

Waltheof, "which was generally worn by the ladies of England from the beginning of the eighth to the close of the eleventh century. I reached, as you see, from the top of the forehead to the shoulders, covering the head so completely, that no part of the hair could be seen. It was then passed over both shoulders, and when loose, hung down as low as the knees, but it was often wrapped round the neck so as to conceal the whole bosom. Towards the conclusion of the twelfth century, it was worn of a smaller size, and tied under the chin like a cap—thus."

"If possible, still more hideous. Why, how can you imagine that I shall ever wear any thing half so ugly?"

"The *kerchef*, *peplus*, or *veil*, was sometimes pulled over the chin, so as to cover all the lower part of the face, from the bottom of the nose," continued Waltheof, without appearing to notice the lady's observation. "Here is an example—

I find this fashion alluded to by Matthew Paris, in his account of the Bishop of Ely's flight in the year of Christ 1192."

"Upon my word, Mr. de Cantilupe, I must commend your taste. Only look at it, Lady Rothsay—nothing visible but one eye, and the point of the nose."

"The modesty of the kerchef is a general subject of the praises of our older poets," said Waltheof, faintly.

"*Modest*, indeed; I think Lady Lucretia Clinton herself could not object to it on that ground. But what is this?"

"That is the *wimple*, or *gimple*, which became fashionable about the close of the twelfth century, and was long worn by all classes. The wimple and veil were often worn together. In this drawing you observe it is curiously plaited. You doubtless remember Chaucer's Prioress—

'ful semely her wymple pynched was;'

but wimples were often made of silk, and em-

broidered with gold, as in the next sketch, though nuns were forbidden to wear them of such materials."

"Well, I will have none of your wimple either, whether plaited or embroidered. Mowbray," continued she, as she turned to another, "Mowbray, come here; you will find nothing new in Lady Burlington's album, I assure you. Come here, and assist me with your advice. Is not this a very becoming head-dress?—and the neck—how very graceful!—a shawl wrapped two or three times round the neck, and then fastened so closely to the chin, that it looks as if it were nailed to it. What, in the name of all that is horrible, do you call this, Mr. de Cantilupe?"

"That is the *gorget*, Miss Turnbull. It originated on the continent, but was introduced into England about the close of the thirteenth century. However, I believe it was never very common in this country."

"I should really hope not, for the credit of our ancestors' taste."

"Perhaps you may prefer the celebrated *horned head-dress* to the more ancient fashions. You are aware that the ladies of the most civilized parts of Europe were long ardently attached to it. Notwithstanding the most inveterate hostility of the clergy, and the perpetual attacks of poets and satirists, it kept its ground for many ages."

"And what was the nature of this favourite head-dress?"

"It consisted, originally, of a mixture of woollen cloth and silk, with two horns, resembling turrets, and was often ornamented with bugles, rings, glasses, and other gewgaws."

"Very elegant, doubtless."

"It was generally esteemed so. But I prefer another fashion—here is an instance," continued he, unfolding a drawing still more elaborately finished than the rest, on which he seemed to gaze with considerable pride. "This fashion, I

confess, is, of all ancient English head-dresses, the one which I most admire. It is elegant in itself, and most interesting, from the recollections with which it is associated. Here it is, Miss Turnbull;—a little more this way, Lady Burlington, you will see it more to advantage from the spot where I stand. A roll of white linen, pointed like a steeple, with two long wings on each side, forms the cap. It was covered, as you see, with a piece of fine lawn, which hung down to the ground, and was often worn tucked under the arm."

"And what do you call the great sails on each side?"

"They were called the *wings*, and the cap was supposed to resemble a butterfly."

"Did it never strike you that they are much more like the ears of an ass? What an immense height! No modern door could admit such a steeple."

"I can easily believe it," replied Waltheof.

"When Isabel of Bavaria, the luxurious consort of Charles the Sixth, of France, kept her court at Vincennes, it was found necessary to enlarge all the doors in the palace, in order to admit the head-dresses of the Queen, and her attendants."

"I am afraid Lady Brighton would hardly be so complaisant as to enlarge even one door to admit your humble servant: so I must be content to forego the celebrated head-dress of Isabel of Bavaria."

This was too much for poor Waltheof; he folded his sketches with a most rueful countenance, and after sitting silent for a few minutes, suddenly started up, and abruptly took his leave. Miss Turnbull, who was engaged in conversation with Mowbray, either did not, or would not, see him leave the room. She was cross-examining him about his visit to Devondale-house the evening before, with such skill as her naturally feeble intellect could derive from acute jealousy.

"What sort of person is this Miss Arnot?" asked Lady Burlington.

"Oh, very presentable, I assure you; and, if Mr. Mowbray thinks of her as a wife, she has the advantage of having been brought up to the profession."

"Is she good-looking?"

"Very much so. If she were a few years younger, and did not squint, she would be a perfect beauty. Some people, to be sure, have a prejudice against red hair, and I confess I do think her mouth a little too large."

"She is not young."

"About thirty, I believe."

"Exactly twenty-three; you know her mother told us so the last time she was here," said Lady Rothsay, who was not sorry to fan the lady's jealousy.

"Yes, my dear Lady Rothsay, and she told us the same five years ago, when I was last at Arleston. Do you remember how venerable the

young lady looked in Juliet, the other day, when the Clintons persuaded her to perform with their brother?—a Romeo of fourteen, and a Juliet of forty!—not one day less in looks, I solemnly declare."

All this artillery was played in vain against Mowbray, to whom flattery and coquetry, jealousy and wit, appeared equally indifferent.

Turning from him with an aching heart, the anguish of which she in vain endeavoured to conceal, Miss Turnbull addressed herself to Lord William.

"Have you determined, my lord, in what character you are to appear at Wyaston?"

"In my own, Miss Turnbull. Could you suggest any one more respectable?"

"You jest, my lord; but the Seftons will never forgive you, if you do not go in character. Lady Rothsay, pray give your brother the benefit of your advice. I think a Cossack dress would suit him best—what say you?"

"What have you done, William," said the countess, "with that Highland dress you sometimes wore in Scotland—the Stewart tartan, I mean. If you could get one exactly like it, I think it would meet with Miss Turnbull's approbation."

"It will give me great pleasure if I am so fortunate," replied his lordship, and he gave directions accordingly.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Hence 'tis Hypocrisy, as well
Will serve t' improve a church as zeal;
As persecution or promotion
Do equally advance devotion.

Hudibras.

The attentive reader must remember a certain Mr. Osbaldiston, who has been mentioned more than once in this eventful history. He is a wealthy manufacturer, whose residence is situated three short miles from Arleston. The manners of the man are vulgar enough, but he has good sterling sense, and is thoroughly honest. With the exception of Macdonald, no one has greater influence among the dissenters of the district.

If you have no objection, I will shift the scene to this good man's parlour.

He is in earnest conversation with a lady, who has evidently reached, if not past, the meridian of life, but still retains vestiges of those charms by which, in her youth, she was so eminently distinguished. In spite of a methodistic air, which may be easily detected to be assumed, her manners are singularly polished and pleasing.

"Truly, my good friend," said Lady Deborah Dacre, "I would not press you in this matter, but that I believe the interests of the chosen people are concerned."

"Pardon me, Lady Deborah, but, to be very plain with your ladyship, I cannot see what difference it can make to our church. I mean to vote for Sir Edmond Mortimer, because I approve of his political principles. I have nothing to do with his religion."

"It grieves me to hear you speak after this

manner. Believe me, it grieves me to the soul. Surely there is no matter in which we are at liberty to forget the one thing needful."

"And, after all then, my lady, what would you have me do? I suppose you would not have me vote for that reprobate, Lord William, or for an avowed infidel, like Lord Owen Tudor."

"I would have you meddle with none of these things. Make no covenant with the Hittites, nor with the Girgashites, nor with the Amorites, nor with the Canaanites, nor with the Perizzites, nor with the Hivites, nor with the Jebusites—show no kindness unto them, neither serve their gods. But thus shall ye deal with them. Ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire, for ye are a holy people to the Lord."

In this way Lady Deborah proceeded for

some time, with most irreverent misapplication of scripture, and, apparently, very little to Mr. Osbaldiston's satisfaction.

"But Lord William is sure to be returned if our friends do not interfere, and I am fully convinced that he does not wish us well, and will be very far from consulting our best interests."

"Trust in the Lord. If we touch pitch, are we not defiled? Touch not, taste not, handle not. Is not this the sin for which the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so that he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishataim, king of Mesopotamia?"

"But, if you will permit me, Lady Deborah, I think I can show you that it is clearly our interest——"

"I beseech you, my dear friend, do not speak after this manner. Trust in the Lord. You have eaten and are full, you have built goodly houses and dwelt therein, your herds and your flocks are multiplied, and your silver and your

gold abound; now, therefore, let not your heart be lifted up, neither forget Him who gave you this wealth. Say not, in your heart, I have gathered great riches by my wisdom, and by my cunning, and by the might of my hand, but give Him the glory, and trust in Him."

"I pray that I may trust in Him; but we are not commanded to seclude ourselves from the rest of the world. We have public duties."

"I wish most fervently that I could persuade you that all these things are vanity. Why will you not read the signs of the times? The hour is very short. The bridegroom is at the door. What matters it what earthly governors we serve, or by what earthly laws we are governed, when the earth, with all that is in it, is about to pass away? Is not the number of the beast six hundred threescore and six?"

"You know, Lady Deborah, that on the subject to which you allude, we hold very different

opinions. I cannot believe that we are authorised in submitting the sacred language of inspiration to such strained and fantastic interpretations as those which some divines have recently put upon it."

"Say not so, my good friend, I beseech you. Believe me, I myself, though most unworthy, have wooed the Spirit with much painful searching of the Word to learn this mystery; and I do declare my firm belief that, before the space of three years, there shall be that great banquet spoken of in the Apocalypse, at which all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven shall be gathered together. Then shall they eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, that have served the beast and the false prophet. And the beast and the prophet, and the dragon, that old serpent, shall be cast into the pit, that they may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years.

And the saints shall reign upon the earth. But, when these things come to pass as it is written, then all the power, and the pride, and the wisdom of this world shall be seen to be worse than vanity."

In spite of his habitual politeness, Mr. Osbaldiston could not restrain a slight gesture of impatience.

"But you are stricken with blindness," continued her ladyship, "and do not see the light that is bright about you as the noon." So saying, she rose, and with some coldness took her leave.

The reader, who is unacquainted with the language, not less blasphemous than absurd, in which certain members of the Millenarian sect are accustomed to indulge, will find it difficult to believe that this conversation could have occurred in any part of Great Britain, in this enlightened age. I regret to say that it is not to

be compared in extravagance with many dialogues at which I have had the misfortune to be present.

It is necessary, however, that I should offer some explanation of the deep interest which Lady Deborah manifested in Mr. Osbaldiston's vote. The reasons assigned by her ladyship were very far from deceiving that gentleman, though, perhaps, he imagined very falsely, that they deceived herself. In fact, for the truth must be confessed, she was much more of a hypocrite than an enthusiast.

Many years ago, when Lord William was a mere boy, and Lady Deborah in the full enjoyment of all the charms of beauty and fashion, they had met, and if scandal may be believed for once, their friendship had been *very* intimate. Lord William's appointment to his Indian government interrupted this intimacy; and when his lordship returned, Lady Deborah had left London, and the fashionable world had almost

forgotten her existence. It is more than probable that Lord William had forgotten her too. However that may have been, the lady's memory was certainly not so treacherous.

It was obvious to any one who was acquainted with the political situation of the county, that his lordship's success depended on the neutrality of the dissenters. Macdonald's inactivity in the beginning of the canvass had seemed likely to produce this result; but latterly the influence of Osbaldiston, Franklin, and others, had threatened to throw the weight of that party into the scale of his lordship's rival. The small but violent sect, of which Lady Deborah professed herself a member, had recently gained a considerable number of converts among the dissenters of the district, and her ladyship was on terms of intimacy with all their leading men. Perhaps I have said enough to suggest the true reason of the use which she made of these opportunities, under such hypocritical pretexts as

those which she advanced in her conversation with Osbaldiston.

But whatever Lady Deborah's real motives may have been, her zeal on the subject of the election did not continue. In the course of a visit of two days to Arleston Castle, some occurrences, into which I have no curiosity to inquire minutely, made a strange alteration in her feeling towards Lord William. There had been a blush upon her withered cheek, and a tremor in her voice, as she answered his first inquiries, which displayed very little of that self-possession for which she was once so celebrated. There was no symptom of embarrassment in his lordship's manner during any part of the visit, unless it might be detected in respect, somewhat overscrupulous, and politeness slightly overstrained. In the course of the second day her ladyship met Lord William, *by accident*, alone. I do not know the subject of their conversation, but ever since she has been his lordship's bitterest enemy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"To painted roofs and shining spires,
Th' uneasy seats of high desires,
Let the unthinking many crowd,
Who dare be covetous and proud."

Prior.

It is time to say something of Sir Edmond Mortimer's canvass. Macdonald was still inactive, and although some of the dissenters had determined to support Sir Edmond, by far the greater number preserved a strict neutrality.

The Whigs, as usual, by no means displayed as much dexterity in the art of canvassing as their opponents. While the contest was confined to speeches and declarations, they made a considerable impression; but when it extended

to private and personal solicitation, they were grievously at fault.

Lord William and his friends scoured the county, entering into every house, and addressing men and women in the very streets and highways. The grossest flatteries, the most extravagant promises, and the meanest truckling were hardly spared, if spared at all. In the excitement of so keen a canvass, the most delicate forgot their delicacy, and the most haughty their pride. It is even whispered that Lord Raymond Montfitchett drank porter with a grazier; and some people positively affirm that Anne Audley Arundel, Countess of Flint, Peverell, and Cyvelioc, shook hands with an attorney.

For such scenes, Sir Edmond Mortimer is, of all men, by nature, the most unfitted. I may say very much the same of many of his friends. It is a singular feature in the character of his party.

Of all errors which a Whig can commit—perhaps I should say is in the habit of committing—surely no error is more preposterous than to indulge in a haughty, exclusive, aristocratic demeanour. The old creed of the Whigs never was an aristocratic creed. The political maxims they have defended, in these latter days, are the very reverse of aristocratic. They have always been the best defenders of the people, they have always been the first appellants to the people. For the people they have laboured, for the people they have suffered. How is it then that there ever has been a jealousy between the people and the Whigs? The Whigs have always been too careless of popularity. As a body, they have always been aristocratic in their manners, though democratic in their principles. They have disdained to flatter, though anxious to serve. They have been courageous in their accusations, but cowards in their praise. They have grudged every smile, while profuse of their

time, their labour, and their fortunes; and while they have spared no other sacrifice, have shrunk from the smallest sacrifice of dignity with the most sensitive alarm.

Such is Sir Eustace de Vesey, such is Sir Dacre Paul Dacre, such, with few exceptions, are the Tracys, the Tressilians, the Daltons, the Warrens—all, in short, on whose friendship Sir Edmond, in this canvass, principally relied.

There was, however, one member of his committee of a very different character. Sir Fulk Montacute has much more in common with the willow than the oak. Pride, unquestionably, is not one of his faults. During the greater part of his life, Sir Edmond had found him among his keenest political opponents. In truth, Sir Fulk has only one principle in such matters, to attend most cautiously to his own personal interest.

How shall I paint the habits of a political rat, an animal, every motion of which is the object of the most anxious observation to practical phi-

losophers, however much despised by the generality of mankind? If, for a few months, he present himself in that barren region on the left, where places there are none, and the sun of pensions doth not shine, the stocks fall ten per cent., and men look fearfully upwards, expecting some strange revolution in the political horizon. If he be absent, the stocks vibrate, and the money market is in a ferment. If he take his seat in his accustomed place, with calm eye and an untroubled brow, the stocks rise, public confidence is restored, and the wise lift up their voices in universal doxology to the ministers who rule in the councils of our king.

Such is Sir Fulk Montacute, the most accomplished rat in either house of Parliament. He is not the man to wait to the last hour before he quits a falling house, for he knows the precise moment when one desertion may decide the battle, and the highest price will be given to a renegade. Far less is he the man to stick by a

defeated party, except on those rare occasions, when his political foresight enables him to prognosticate that defeat is only the harbinger of securer victory.

Sir Fulk is a finished courtier, and though very generally despised, is by no means very generally disliked. He knows the secret key to most hearts, the exact species of vanity which it is necessary to address in each instance. With those who do not know him intimately, the extreme courtesy of his address, ludicrous to those who have witnessed its indiscriminate application, has often a very favourable effect.

On the other hand, you must not imagine that all Lord William's friends were men of popular manners. No man, for example, is more universally disliked than Sir Vivian Chartres de Vere.

If I were disposed to lament the extinction of the English squirearchy, I might find some consolation in contemplating Sir Vivian's character.

The old English squire, who appears so amiable in the pages of Addison, and is scarcely less attractive in those of Washington Irving in real life, was the most ignorant, the most bigoted, and the most brutal of all tyrants that ever exercised political influence in a country pretending to be free—a tyrant indeed to his miserable dependents, but, at all times, sufficiently ready, from the most contemptible motives, to truckle without a blush to the meanest underlings of power—ready to get drunk at any hour in bumpers to the church, the king, and the constitution, but equally ready at a moment's warning to barter his faith and his allegiance to Hanover or Stewart, the pope or the devil, for a pension, a place, or a peerage.

The family of Chartres de Vere furnished many such men in the last century, and Sir Vivian is, in all respects, a worthy representative of his ancestors:—at home, exercising with ruthless severity every species of petty tyranny with

which the country gentlemen of England have been pleased to arm themselves; and in Parliament, giving a blind, but not the less unhesitating, support to every successive ministry. But there is a point beyond which he had never gone. He had stood by his order in every lesser question. He had upheld, *per fas* and *nefas*, the corn laws, the game laws, and all the other laws, by which his order was protected. There is, therefore, no room for wondering at his opposition, when there seemed to be a prospect of encroachment on the very foundation of the order, the very corner-stone of the oligarchy of England.

Sir Vivian, accordingly, is an anti-reformer *on principle*, not, like his cousin, Sir Reginald Vipont, from mere habit. No one, assuredly, will suspect Sir Reginald of dishonesty, however much he may doubt his wisdom. It is impossible not to pity the old gentleman. The creed which he professes has been the standard of orthodoxy all his life, and he clings to it still,

in abject, unreasoning superstition, though unspeakably puzzled and distressed when he hears it reviled, as a pernicious heresy, by men of talent and respectability.

Sir Vivian de Vere did more harm than good to Lord William's canvass. He is indeed the most unpopular man in the west of England. But such men as Hyde Basset, Wortley Jerningham, Otho Corbet, Roland Conyngham, the Clintons, the Seftons, the Comyns, and the Joscelines, good landlords, and men of easy access, were both active and useful.

Of all the canvassers, however, on either side, I give the palm without hesitation to the Countess of Rothsay. Certainly, since English ladies, in an evil hour for English happiness, first busied themselves with such matters, no female ever won so many votes for an unpopular candidate. In former times the matrons of our country had too much delicacy to mingle in such contests.

The warmest friend of popular elections (and there is none warmer than myself) may not venture to deny, that they are attended with grievous evils. Their greatest advantages, the life which they infuse into public spirit, and the notoriety which they communicate to political conduct, are inseparable from the danger of tumult, and the certainty of slander. The fairest reputation and the best established credit have been destroyed by the squibs which are circulated on such occasions; the privacy of domestic circles has been violated without compunction, and neither age nor sex respected in the merciless persecution of party spirit.

Of the other evils of popular elections, I would rather seek the remedy than the exposure, being thoroughly convinced that, with all their evils, they are the only effectual security for good government.

CHAPTER XXX.

"She ne'er saw courts, but courts could have undone,
With untaught looks and an unpractised heart;
Her nets the most prepared could never shun,
For nature spread them in the scorn of art."

Davies.

If you have ever passed a week at Arleston Castle, you surely must have heard of pretty Mrs. Fulton, the young wife of the old game-keeper at the South Lodge. For the last five years, those wicked black eyes of hers, and that coquettish little foot, have played the very devil with the young gentlemen who come down to shoot the duke's pheasants every autumn. Her only ostensible occupation is to receive the letters from the London mail as it passes, and to arrange

and deliver them in all safety to the corpulent butler. In this laborious task, she was wont to be assisted by privy counsellors, members of parliament, and knights of every order in Christendom. In short, she held a morning levee more regularly than a minister of state. I do not know whether her beauty be on the wane, or her wit have lost any portion of its savour, but it is certain that for some time she has fallen into comparative neglect.

It was not therefore without some surprise, as well as pleasure, that she saw Lord William enter the lodge one morning at a very early hour.

"Any letters for me, Mrs. Fulton?" said his lordship. "Why, the bag is not opened, I declare. Bates will be here before they are arranged."

"Oh no, my lord, he will not leave the castle for two hours yet."

"Is it so early?"

"Very little past seven, my lord. My old man has just gone out. He is to be away all day, and the Lord only knows what I am to do with myself all the morning. I dare not go up to the castle when there is company there, for I should have no peace with him if he heard of it, he is so jealous. Nay, for that matter, if he were to hear your lordship had been here so early, and we all alone together, there's no saying what the devil would put into his head."

Lord William was silent.

"Though I must say I never knew your lordship rude nor uncivil to a body, no way, and no time, my lord. But, indeed, he is no man to lead me such a life, and if I were like some women, I wouldn't be treated so for nothing—so I wouldn't."

"Oh, he is a very shocking fellow, Mrs. Fulton, I have no doubt, and does not deserve such a pretty wife; but pray give me my letters, if you have any for me, for I am in haste."

" I'm sure I beg your lordship's pardon," said the lady, rather sullenly, opening the bag.

What Lord William found in his letters may perhaps be guessed from the following paragraph, which appeared in an evening paper, received at Arleston the same day.

MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE.

Elopement of the celebrated Miss C——.

" This morning, the friends of the most celebrated actress of the day were thrown into the greatest alarm, by her sudden and mysterious disappearance. She performed last night in her favourite character of Beatrice. We were fortunate enough to be present, and have given our opinion of the talent which she exhibited in another part of this paper. She never acted with greater spirit.

"It seems that she was handed into her carriage by the manager, and left the theatre, as he understood, with the intention of proceeding im-

mediately to her house in Keppel-street. Her coachman says, that in turning into Long-acre, the carriage was stopped by a stranger on horseback, who, after a few minutes' conversation with his mistress, told him that she desired to be driven to Cumberland-gate as fast as possible. On arriving there, accompanied by the same gentleman, they found a dark carriage with four horses in waiting, which his mistress entered by herself, the stranger remaining on horseback. He adds, that Miss C——, who appeared in a state of great agitation, ordered him to tell her other servants that she would return in a few days.

"Here the matter rests, and the circumstances have given rise to all manner of conjectures. It has long been notorious, that a connexion, by no means of a platonic nature, existed between the fair fugitive and a certain leader in the fashionable world, who is at present canvassing a western county, but to all others her virtue was believed to be impregnable.

"Whether a certain marquis, well known at Crockford's, whose usual residence is not one hundred miles from the Albany, knows any thing of this elopement, it is not for us to say."

"Who can they mean," said Lady Deborah Dacre to Lady Martha Montford, when she read this passage, "by a certain leader in the fashionable world, who is canvassing a western county? Surely they do not allude to Lord William, and yet there is only one county canvass——"

"They mean no one else, I assure you," said Lady Martha. "Surely you have heard the report before. I always shut my eyes and ears to such stories as much as possible; but there are some things one cannot avoid hearing. However, the worst is not true, at all events, and as to the rest, I am sincerely happy that the girl has been wise enough to remove herself at the present moment."

"What is *the worst*, and why *at the present moment?*"

"Did you never hear it whispered that his lordship was privately married to Miss Cibber; and do you not know that he has lately proved the falsehood of the report by very marked attentions to another?"

"I knew nothing of all this."

"I assure you the story was very current at one time. Indeed, a Scotch lady, a particular friend of mine, assured me that it was confidently rumoured in Edinburgh, that the girl herself had asserted as much to Lady Cordelia Hamilton, who believed her story, and continued to honour her with her patronage accordingly. I never believed it, and Lord William has taken the best way to silence all such scandal. I have reason to think that he will be married as soon as possible after the election."

"You have not told me the bride's name."

"Oh, it has not come to that yet, neither. I only give you my *suspicions*. I make it a rule never to pry into such matters; but one cannot be quite blind, and I am not the only person who thinks it will be a marriage."

"But the name, my dear Lady Martha, the young lady's name——"

"I cannot believe but that you must guess the person I mean. I really think his lordship has chosen very well. Flora Macdonald is an especial favourite of mine. She has good principles, good temper, and—and—and a good fortune; which, to tell you the truth, I am afraid his lordship will not think the least recommendation."

CHAPTER XXXI.

" Love from Time's wings has stolen the feathers sure,
He has, and put them to his own,
For hours of late as long as days endure,
And very minutes hours are grown."

Cowley.

THE hour of the long expected ball at Wyaston has arrived. The magnificent rooms are beginning to be filled with company. The blue velvet drawing-room, the crimson satin drawing-room, and the grand saloon, are thrown open to the dancers. A gorgeous banquet is prepared in the hall; the theatre is splendidly illuminated; a political economist, who ought to be chancellor of the exchequer, is lecturing to a few admirers in the library; a lady, who might have been

prima donna of the season, is holding her court in the golden pavilion. The saloon is thronged with old and young, in dresses of every clime, from Tornes to Pambamarca, and of every age, from the accession of Nimrod to the second exile of the Bourbons. In that corner you would think there was a rehearsal of the Rovers, where the chivalry of the first Crusade, and the cavaliers of the Camp of Wallenstein, the Tenth Legion, and the Tenth Hussars, unite into one brilliant focus, all that the world has ever witnessed of the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war. In this, you may distinguish every mode and ornament of dress, which the fertile ingenuity of woman, civilized or savage, has devised to heighten or deform her charms. Every combination of sight and sound is realised, which the wildest fancy, in its most lawless mood, has ever formed. An Egyptian priest is revealing the mysteries of Almack's; a harlequin is discussing the transcendental philosophy; a nun, who

never said a paternoster, is waltzing with a Brahmin, who never heard of Vishnoo. In all directions, the eye encounters such grotesque confusion, as is only equalled in the chaos of distempered dreams.

While the company assemble, let us take our places beside Lady Sibilla, who is doing the honours in her mother's absence. I will do my best to introduce you to any one worth knowing.

That elderly gentleman, with a black sheepskin cap, jacket of bright scarlet, a cashmere shawl wound round his waist, and otherwise attired in the strictest Persian costume, is a celebrated traveller. If you listen to his conversation, which, if it were not so incessant, you would have no difficulty in admitting to be both amusing and instructive, you will probably find him descanting on the Persian music to Lady Cecilia, or the Turkuman horses to Lady Sophia, repeating the choicest passages of Firdousee or Jellâl-ood-deen to Lady Sibilla, or exciting the

envy of the whole circle by describing the lustre of the *Deria-e-Noor*. Let us attend to him for one moment.

"We suppose that all Eastern poetry is grotesque and extravagant. Nothing can be more false. What European poet abounds in beauties more simple or natural than Sadee? For example:

'Berf-e-peeree meenesheened ber sêr-em
Hem-choon-ân teba-em jevânee kooned.'

Can any thing be more touching?"

And so the worthy knight will go on for hours, careless whether his audience understand a single syllable of his quotations. There is a pleasure in talking which none but talkers know.

I see your eye is resting on that little bustling old lady in black satin. She is a very good creature, I can assure you. The honourable Tabitha Talbot nature surely destined to be a mother. She is a very mother to every man, woman, and child, to every calf, pig, and chicken,

that needs, or will permit, maternal care. How many old women, how many more old men, are her pensioners! How many hopeless swains, how many despairing damsels take her counsel! How many orphan children has she not at nurse! And then, again, is there any sick animal in seven parishes, brute or human, whose case she does not know? Is there any birth, marriage, christening, or burial, within the like district, where she is not remembered? If we turn to her domestic establishment, what squadrons of ducks, what regiments of turkeys, what cohorts of geese, what legions of chickens, owe to her fostering care their portion in this world, whether of misery or woe! But, whatever may have been the intention of nature, the honourable Tabitha Talbot is still unmarried, though bordering on her sixtieth year.

I hope you recognize the Clintons. Who could mistake Lady Lucretia's starched pro-

priety, or Lady Lucy's vulgar laugh. Hyde has not the most distant resemblance to any of his cousins.

Room for the noble family of Brandon. The pride of fifty German Electors, five Grandees of Castile and two Highland Lairds, would hardly suffice for the princely House of Otterbourne.

I need not trouble you with the names of these *men* and *women* who follow. They are the mere spectators of the drama.

> Alas! what anxious toil has won,
> Perchance, their fleeting triumph here;
> What bitter joy, when all was done,
> And entrance granted with a sneer.
>
> But pride its food from pain shall borrow,
> And those to-night's neglect shall gall,
> Will fly o'er half the world to-morrow,
> To boast of *Brighton*'s charming ball.

Let them pass. But here comes a principal performer, a chief attraction of the evening. No, not that fair girl with the diamonds, nor that

comely little woman who smiles so winningly, nor that stately personage with the feathers, but that plain, insignificant, elderly young woman, to whom the nobleman with the green riband is paying such marked attention. You must have heard of Miss Katherine Fortescue. I suppose you expected to find her a person of a very different appearance. She has, as you see, a low forehead, a pug nose, a wide mouth, thick lips, saffron teeth, cheek-bones rather prominent, and a complexion the reverse of clear. Her stature is not commanding, her figure is far from being good, she waddles in her gait, and squints confoundedly. Let me whisper too that her temper is peculiarly unhappy; in fact, wherever her charms may lie, decidedly it is not there. You may well ask for what her society is courted; that it is so is unquestionable. She is followed by the rich and the learned, the noble and the powerful, the witty and the fair. The secret lies in one word—*Fashion:* but he who can paint

air, or grasp the sunbeam, alone can adequately conceive, or successfully describe, the full force and meaning of that potent word.

I expected to have seen a lady in her company to-night whose attractions are of a very different nature;—and, if I am not very much mistaken, she is here.

It is so: I could not be wrong. Come this way from the glare of these lamps. Did you ever see a form more faultless? Her glance, her smile, her slightest motion, the sweet tone of her most silver voice, all are the perfection of modest dignity. She should have been a queen. Indulge me for one moment longer. Her raven tresses, parted on her white and lofty forehead; her well-arched eyebrow, and her flashing eye; a small ripe lip; a cheek perhaps too pale—but I have seen it brightened by a blush—on these we may gaze unblamed: but who, with the cold eye of art, may look upon that perfect bust, that round arm of clear and healthy hue, that tiny

foot, that step, light but firm, those thousand charms, the least of which quicken even the pulses of the old, and hurry the hot blood of youth in burning torrents to the heart? If such be the feelings of those who see her for the first time, how ardently must he love her whom the experience of an intimate friendship has taught, that the qualities of her mind are still more rare than the exquisite beauties of her person?

Do you recognize that tall man in the Highland dress? He approaches: the blush I spoke of is on her cheek, and on her brow. Lord William looks on Flora Macdonald, and whispers soft words in her ear, as he looked on one, even still more fair, and whispered to one who loved at least as truly, on that bright summer evening on which Maria's mother died. The glance is the same, and the words are the same, but his heart may never throb for woman as it once throbbed for her he has betrayed.

He has led her aside, and the moment has

come, so long expected, when she is to be made certain that he loves. In a low voice, quickly and passionately, he has spoken, and the short-drawn breath, and the white trembling lip, and the tear, falling on her yielding hand, have told him that her heart is won.

They are not unseen. That old lady's eye has been on them for the last half hour. I certainly had no expectation of meeting Lady Deborah Dacre at a fancy ball. She must have had some strong motive for countenancing such a scene of dissipation by her presence.

Let us look into the supper-room. The tide has been setting in that direction for some time. Heavens! what a Babel of tongues! They are holding some very interesting argument at yonder table. Is the question political, literary, or scientific? does it concern private character or the public welfare? The Reverend Dr. Malpas, and the Most Noble the Marquis of Launceston,

are discussing the relative merits of Chambertin and Romanée Conti, as if the fate of the empire or the church depended on the controversy. The dispute has been referred to the decision of Waltheof de Cantilupe and the traveller, who are standing by. The antiquarian could descant for an hour on the wines of the ancients, from the Maronean of Homer to the Falernian of Horace; but his most modern information is probably derived from the procession of vintages in the "*Bataille des Vins.*" The traveller, however, who can speak on all subjects with equal fluency, is prepared, I perceive, to deliver an opinion.

"It is impossible to compare two vintages so radically different in their characters. I should as soon think of comparing the white muscadine of Cyprus with the red wine of Ithaca. But, to say the truth, I never wish to see either the one or the other on my table, for, though I am rather partial to the Vino Santo of Santorini, a man

who has spent three years in Persia is seldom satisfied with what is produced in any other country."

"They have good wines in Persia."

"Persia, sir, is the native country of the vine. There are Sheerauz, Casvin, Yezd, Teheran, Tabriz, Isfahan: your European wines will not bear comparison with the worst of these."

"Which do you prefer?"

"Why, really, that is a puzzling question. Casvin is the most celebrated, but there are some kinds of Sheerauz which I think better, when genuine. For example, when I last dined with my particular friend Ibrahim Khan, the wine he gave me from his own vineyard at Dusht-e-Arjun was certainly the best liquor I ever tasted. I remember that day as one of the happiest in my life—a truly Persian sky, music, Hafiz, and a dinner in the best sense Epicurean. We began with fruit and sweetmeats—by the way, a much more wholesome arrangement than the ridiculous

fashion which prevails in this country; then the pipe; then pillaus, rice, kubabs, and roasted fowls: at my particular request, a single glass of Ma-ul-Hiat, the only liqueur I ever taste, was added, and then *the wine*. My host is an orthodox Mahomedan, but, when he does drink, he gets very tipsy, for, as his countrymen say, there is as much sin in a cup as in a flagon. And, indeed, the wine of Dusht-e-Arjun proved so excellent, that it was not without an effort that I refrained from following his example. In my opinion, it has exactly that mixture of sweetness and asperity, that *terribile dolcerra*, which connoisseurs allow to be the most desirable combination of tastes which either liquors or viands can possess. I thought it very nearly perfect, and yet I have the vanity to believe, that I suggested to my friend, on that occasion, no small improvement in its manufacture."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. The aromatic principle, you are

aware, resides principally in the skin of the grape. Now, I proposed, that after the first fermentation had subsided, a few of the ripest clusters should be suspended in the cask. He followed my suggestion, and I have been given to understand, by recent letters from Persia, that the experiment has been crowned with almost miraculous success."

It has fallen to Bailie Macdonald to conduct Lady Deborah Dacre to the supper-room. In his unintelligible dialect he is doing his best to amuse her ladyship. He is directing her attention, at this moment, to Harry Mowbray, who is entering the room with Miss Turnbull leaning on his arm.

"They say that yon couple are to be married, my leddy, when aince the lawyers ha'e finished the settlements to their mind; but that sort o' gentry's no to be hurried. Ah, my leddy, lawyers are kittle cattle to shoe ahint. Faith, though, the lassies find a way to trick the lawyers

in my country. I mind, a'e summer, some years syne, I was witness to a marriage in Balwhidder, that was got up in saxteen minutes—the question put, consent given, the haill ceremony, and what not, in saxteen minutes, my leddy, what think you o' that? I'll tell you the story, if your leddyship pleases."

"I shall be delighted to hear it." Lady Deborah utters these words in a very absent tone, and, if I am not mistaken, her eyes are wandering towards Lord William, whose manly figure, displayed to full advantage in the tartan, is the most conspicuous in the room.

"You see, there was a young leddy, frae Edinburgh, had been boarding wi' an auld woman in the glen, and an English lad she had kent in the south came up to the shooting, and hearing she was there, doon he goes in the gloamin', as was natural, to see her. Weel, frae less to mair, they got upon the topic of matrimony, and, I'm thinking, may be they had been

on that topic before. However, he got her consent to be his wife, and a fellow he had wi' him took mind there was a man in my cousin's service, that was wont to buckle folk in the auld Scotch fashion. So he comes west, while we were at our toddy, and speers for auld Donald to do his office. When I heard that, naething would serve me but I would be witness to the ceremony, and I went wi' them to the wedding. The bridegroom was dressed in the bonnet and philabeg, for your English lads are mad fond of the tartan on the hills, and a double-barrelled gun in his hand, just as he had come frae the moor; the lassie, puir thing, in her ordinar', not so much as a white riband in her hair, and greeting a' the time. Donald made them join hands. 'Are you baith willing to be married folk?' said he. They bowed their heads, and the lad said, *Yes*, but the lassie couldna' speak. 'Nae need o' mair words,' quo' Donald: 'you are man and wife;' and wi' that he turned on his heel. 'Sillary,'

said the bridegroom to the man that had brought us, ' give that to the parson ;' and back came we to our toddy, laughing like mad to hear auld Donald called a parson."

Lady Deborah has suddenly become attentive.

" Did the bridegroom call his friend Sillary?"

" Yes. Sillary was the name. I noticed it particularly, for it 's a name I never heard from that time to this."

" And was this a good marriage? Do you hold this a binding marriage?"

" Good enough, fast enough, my leddy. No faster marriage in Scotland, aye, or in England or Ireland either."

" I think you said this Englishman was in a Highland dress?"

" Yes, in the philabeg and bonnet. He wore the Stewart tartan."

" Was his dress like that gentleman's beside the pillar?"

There is a pause. It is worth while to observe the worthy bailie's countenance. Thrice he has tried to speak, but the words die away in an uncertain murmur. At last his surprise finds expression in a long low whistle.

"The very dress—and—my God! *that's the man!*"

"Pooh, pooh, my good sir, the dress deceives you. That is Lord William Plantagenet."

"I ken wha it is vera weel. I thought I had seen his lordship before. As I'm a sinner, that's the man. Begging your leddyship's pardon—I've vera particular business."

"One moment, Mr. Macdonald, if you please. Perhaps I should not interfere in this affair, but I will not conceal from you that I can guess the nature of your business, and, if you will favour me with your private ear for a few minutes, I think I can give you both information and advice which may be useful to you."

CHAPTER XXXII.

" It is the trumpet and the drum
That make the warrior's stomach come;
Whose noise whets valour sharp like beer
By thunder turn'd to vinegar:
For if a trumpet sound, or drum beat,
Who has not a month's mind to combat?"

Hudibras.

The morning of the election dawned. The narrow streets of the county town were filled with people. The windows streamed with the colours of the candidates. The sounds of various instruments, by no means in the strictest harmony, announced their approach from opposite quarters.

Sir Edmond and Lord William arrived at the hustings at the same moment, in open carriages, to which their partisans, to prove their zeal, had

harnessed themselves, after the good old English fashion. Lord Owen Tudor, the third candidate, abhorring the fashion, as beneath the dignity of freemen, and despising, or pretending to despise, all vehicles as effeminate, *walked* sturdily through the crowd, in a coarse blue coat, with large steel buttons, and with an oaken staff in his hand; earning, by this affectation of rusticity, the loudest shouts of the rabble, who pressed back on all sides to leave him a passage.

Sir Vivian Chartres De Vere then proposed Lord William Plantagenet as a proper person to represent the county in parliament. Sir Edmond Mortimer was named by Sir Dacre Paul Dacre, and Owen Tudor by Oliver Thistleton. A poll being demanded, the numbers stood:

Sir Edmond Mortimer ——
Lord William Plantagenet ——
Lord Owen Tudor ——

It is not worth while to trouble you with the speeches of the candidates. In the course of a year, in which there have been two general elections, and is likely to be a third, my readers will readily excuse the infliction of a species of oratory at best never strictly Ciceronian. I must, however, remark that Lord Owen, though so low on the poll, had decidedly the advantage when it came to declamation. Sir Edmond had declared himself a reformer, but, as the measure which the ministry contemplated was then unknown, Lord Owen, without fear of authoritative contradiction, assumed that it would be partial and delusive, and triumphantly demanded from his rival specific pledges in favour of vote by ballot, annual parliaments, and universal suffrage. As for Lord William, not one word of his oration was heard three feet from the hustings; but notwithstanding this reception, and his inferiority to Mortimer on the poll, he

seemed in the highest spirits, and returned thanks in dumb show, bowing and smiling with the most imperturbable good-nature.

The next day, however, the scene was changed. The hustings were surrounded by a strong body of the dissenters and their adherents, who, much to Sir Edmond Mortimer's surprise, received Lord William with boisterous cheers. Nothing indeed could exceed his astonishment when he learned that Macdonald had declared himself in favour of his rival, and had been actively employed, during the whole of the preceding day, in canvassing on his behalf. He had suspected the attachment between Flora and his lordship, but it had never occurred to him that any event was likely to induce his attorney to take an active part against one to whom he owed so much, especially when he did so at the expense of surrendering those political principles, to which he had often professed, in his hearing, the most earnest devotion.

As Mowbray pressed through the crowd to take his place beside Lord William on the hustings, his hand was grasped by a distant relation of his own, a merchant in Fairhaven, who whispered, as he passed,

"His lordship's return is secured, set your mind at ease on that subject; and I have done what I could for your other friend, but I fear the feeling of the town is against him."

The man had passed before an explanation could be asked. His last words were a perfect riddle to Harry, who puzzled himself the whole morning to discover their meaning. He was the more puzzled, that, in the course of the last few days, he had met with several hints of the same kind, and sundry very knowing nods and becks, and wreathed smiles, from those of his Fairhaven friends whom he accidentally encountered, to which he could assign no adequate interpretation.

Macdonald's assistance proved decisive, and, at the close of the poll, Lord William stood so

high, that his opponents declined to continue the contest, and accordingly he was declared duly elected.

The scene of confusion which ensued baffles description. The rage of the radical party was extreme, and was expressed by all kinds of noise and outrage. Lord William and his immediate friends, under the protection of the strong guard of voters who had surrounded the hustings, made their retreat, not only in comparative safety, but with some pretensions to a triumph; but many of his supporters, and almost all those who had voted for Sir Edmond Mortimer, were very roughly handled. At length the more obnoxious took refuge in the Ulster Arms, before which the mob, after breaking every window within their reach, continued their yells and execrations for several hours.

In the midst of this uproar, the baronet was saluted by Bailie Macdonald, who made a most

rueful appearance, his face and head having been cut with brickbats in more places than one.

"Hech, man, but this is a hullabaloo," began the worthy magistrate. "Here's what you Englishers ca' liberty—a man canna vote for his freend, but he gets his croon cracked. To be sure we've no right to complain, since we've carried the day, but it's unco hard for you, Sir Edmond, that maun bide baith the skaith and the scorn.

"Speaking o' that—a word in your lug. You see this lord is to marry a bit lassie a freend o' mine, and I mauna say I'm sorry he's elected, but I wish you weel, Sir Edmond, for a' that, and if you'll let an auld man tak' an auld man's privilege, I'll gie you a hint you'll no be a hair the waur o'.

"You're clean wrang in this business, tak' my word for't. You're leaning on a broken reed. What though the Whigs ha'e the upper

hand at this present time, they canna' haud it, man, they canna' haud it. There 's Lord Melville, and Lord Lauderdale, and Lord Hopetoun, and the Yerle o' Mansfield, and the Deuk o' Buccleuch, a' in opposition. What meenistry can stand that?—Na, na, trust me, they canna' haud it. You 're clean wrang; but you 're young yet, and you 've time before you, and the warld for the winning, as they say. Cheer up, man, there 's aye life for a living man, only leave you the Whigs to their ain devices. Mind, though, naething sudden—that 's no respectable. It 's vera weel for me, and the like o' me, that naebody minds puir dirty bodies, that hardly ken their faithers; but you 're a gentleman, and come o' gentle kin, and the country looks up to you. Na, na, naething sudden; but veer roond gradually—aye, be veering roond. Pick a quarrel here, and tak' offence there, till you 've shaken aff maist feck o' your present freends, and pay a compliment to this man, and yield a point to

that man, till Sir Robert, and the rest o' them, get a conceit o' you;—then watch you for the first riot in Nottingham, or the first bawbee blasphemy in Fleet-street, and be up in a bleeze direckly, and crack aboot the constitution, and the kirk, and property, and the peerage—and the business is settled. Oh, mony 's the fiery young Whig I 've seen come roond in my time, that 's as crouse a Tory as the best o' them noo, and has stars, and titles, and sinecures without number, no to mention pensions to twa or three bitches of aunties."

With these words Bailie Macdonald closed his advice, which would not have been received as passively as it was, if Sir Edmond had understood one word in three that the honest Scotchman uttered.

In the meantime, under the protection of their faithful escort, Lord William, with a few of his friends, had left the town uninjured. The streets in the direction of Arleston were thronged with

his adherents. The mob cheered the carriage as it passed with cries of Plantagenet! Plantagenet and the constitution!—and just as it reached the bridge, a knot of Fairhaven shopkeepers, who recognised Harry Mowbray, added, waving their hats, Turnbull for ever! Turnbull and Mowbray! Turnbull and independence!

Harry looked to Lord William for an explanation of these shouts, and reading some confusion in his countenance, his eyes were partially opened to the true state of the case.

They no sooner arrived at home, than he mounted his horse, and without saying a word to any one at Arleston, rode directly to Fairhaven. Once there, he had no difficulty in discovering the shameful use which Lady Rothsay's emissaries had made of his name. The thing had been so managed, that he did not find it possible to bring it home to the proper parties, in such a way that he could take notice of it, as perhaps his passion at the moment would have

prompted him to do, if it had been in his power, but he had no hesitation in resolving to break off all intercourse with the Plantagenet family, as well as to remove all doubts in the public mind, as to his true sentiments. Boiling with indignation, he instantly wrote a circular to his friends, disowning any wish to influence their votes in favour of Mr. Turnbull, professing his undiminished respect for their present representative, and avowing his determination to support him, as usual, in the event of an election.

His next task was to address a letter to Mr. Arnot himself, explaining all the circumstances. The letter was long, and contained some very interesting passages, but as I am not in possession of it, I must leave its contents to the imagination of my readers.

Not choosing, after what had passed, to return to Arleston, he sent a message to his servant to remove what he required to Fairhaven, where he determined to pass the night.

Early next morning he received an answer from Stephen Arnot, by a special messenger, at least as long as his own letter, and probably not less interesting to the parties. However, I think it enough to mention, that it concluded with an invitation to spend a few days at Devondale, expressed in the kindest language, and that the small seal bore the well-known initials, C. A.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

" It is no scandal nor aspersion,
Upon a great and noble person,
To say he naturally abhorr'd
Th' old-fashion'd trick to keep his word;
Though 'tis perfidiousness and shame,
In meaner men, to do the same."

Butler.

On the morning after the election, the duke requested Lord William's presence in the library. His manner betrayed vehement symptoms of a sermon of no ordinary length. His lordship trembled as he bowed assent, and if my readers have any strong objection to be bored, I will not insist on their reading this chapter. I have written it in the spirit of a faithful historian, and cannot promise them much amusement in its perusal. At the same time I must

do his grace the justice to confess, that the advice which it contains is founded on a pretty correct observation of parliamentary tactics in the course of a political life of no short duration.

"After so many congratulations, my dear William," he commenced, "you must not be offended if I use the privilege of a father to offer you some advice. I have seen a good deal of public life, and of public men, and as you have only recently directed your attention to politics, it is to be presumed, that I may have some little information to communicate, which may assist you in the performance of your parliamentary duties.

"Your political principles are all that I could wish, and I am glad to see that you are above the paltry affectation of independence, by which so many young men are ruined. You have attached yourself, as all British statesmen should, to a political *party*. Parties are necessary in

all free states. Do not listen to the nonsense you hear against them. We must yield in a few things, to succeed in many. When bad men combine, good men must not be disunited.

"Let me say one or two words on the ways in which you may be most useful to your party.

"I need not recommend you to cultivate the art of public speaking with assiduity. I was gratified to hear that you made a very tolerable appearance in parliament the other day; but a man of your good sense has not to learn that the talent of guiding a public assembly is not proved by the success of one appearance, and indeed cannot be acquired, without much study, much labour, and much practice. I have devoted considerable attention to the art, and have been intimately acquainted with the greatest orators of my time, and, therefore, I think myself entitled to speak upon the subject with some confidence. You may rely upon my counsel and

assistance in any unexpected difficulty, but, in the mean time, I will give you a few plain rules, which I think you may find useful on most occasions.

"The science of politics, as far as you have any occasion to study, is by no means so abstruse as is generally supposed. If it were so, how is it possible that so many blockheads should have filled the highest places in the government, not only without disgrace, but with universal applause! Details may be safely left to the clerks in the public offices, and professional pamphleteers. All the information which a member of parliament really needs for the most important discussion may be easily gathered from the conversation of the clubs, or, at most, from a few hours of hard cramming before the debate. To mould this information into such arguments as will tell with the House, or with the press, and to arrange the arguments so framed in the most striking and, at the same time, the most pru-

dent manner, is the whole art of parliamentary oratory.

"When a great question, then, is on the eve of discussion, talk on the subject with as many people as possible, read the newspapers with attention, and cram any good pamphlet that comes in your way. In short, make yourself master of the floating opinions on both sides; but, above all, impress distinctly on your memory that view of the question which it suits your party to adopt, and the line of attack or defence by which they show an intention to support it.

"With this general preparation, go down to the House, with a mind as much disentangled as possible from all unnecessary details, especially such details as it may suit your party to overlook. But above all, keep yourself as free from passion as you can. It may sometimes suit you to *pretend* a strong personal feeling in the matter, but, if you really indulge in such feelings, you will infallibly injure the cause you desire to forward.

"I need hardly warn you, that, as the debate proceeds, although you should pay diligent attention to the speakers on both sides, you must harden yourself against any impression, even the most transient, from the arguments of your opponents. If you once allow yourself, even secretly, to admit the justice of their reasoning, you will never be able to attack them with vigour, or to defend yourself with firmness.

"In choosing the moment for rising, neither let it be too early nor too late in the debate. Begin, if you can do so conveniently, by something flattering to the House, and make it an invariable rule to treat it, at all times, with the most profound respect. Indeed, except when you have a specific motive for acting otherwise, be complimentary both to friends and foes, and, except when you wish to irritate, which in some rare cases is useful, always endeavour to say something in the course of your speech which may be agreeable to your opponents.

"It is no easy matter for a young speaker to gain the ear of the House of Commons. Neither political ability, nor eloquence, nor wit, is sufficient. A certain tact, not very easily described, is more valuable than any or all of these. One grand secret is never to tire your audience, or even to make them fear you are going to tire them. Enliven a dry subject by ludicrous illustrations from the topics of the day, vary your style, change the tone of your voice, have recourse to any expedient to avoid monotony.

"There is one secret by which a character for extemporaneous eloquence may be easily acquired. It is practised by our greatest orators. However little study you may devote to the rest of your speech, prepare its concluding sentences with diligence. Clothe them in language condensed and epigrammatic. While the debate proceeds, privately connect them, in your own mind, with some incidental expression of your opponent, so that you may introduce them with-

out appearance of effort, by alluding to that expression. When you come to them in this manner, in order to heighten the illusion, you may at first employ words inadequate to the thought, then seem to hesitate, alter the language, and hit at last, as it were by extemporaneous effort, on the precise idea you were desirous to express*.

"So much for the general art of public speaking; but it is right to warn you of some peculiar difficulties in which you may be placed, when you are obliged to defend, as every public man occasionally must, propositions unpopular or even truly untenable.

"There is no doctrine so unpopular that it may not be put in a light comparatively popular, or that is not closely related to, or connected with, maxims and topics, which are highly ac-

* See *Hamilton's Parliamentary Logic;* which *truly valuable* work, the duke appears to have consulted on more than one topic.

ceptable to its opponents. Pray remember this valuable truth. It is your business never to offend your antagonists more than is absolutely necessary.

"When it is your play to mislead, that is, when there are strong points in your opponent's argument, or, in plain language, when you are sensible that you occupy a false position, the first grand rule is to avoid the question altogether if possible. This may be done in various ways—by diverting the debate into a personal altercation, by nice distinctions, by intentional misunderstanding, by a skilful management of light and shade in your reply, by which its defects are screened from observation. The second grand rule, in such circumstances, is to assume an offensive position as soon as you can: never stand on your defence when you are not conscious of strength. A personal argument is often the best answer; it is seldom that the advocate is as impregnable as his cause, or, if among a

thousand solid and forcible reasons, the attack has been partly founded, through inadvertency, on one which is false or insufficient, address yourself exclusively to it, magnify its importance to the utmost, and then expose its absurdity. If you can find no flaw in the reasoning of your antagonist, take fire at a word, colour it into an argument, and, if you cannot answer his actual accusations, put others into his mouth, and answer them. Lastly, if all these stratagems should fail, cover your deficiency, in strict logic, by a profusion of illustrations, comparisons, and rhetorical ornaments; appeal from the reason to the imagination, to prejudice, to passion. But, above all, in the most desperate position, show no *flinching* by voice or manner; an open, confident demeanour is the first requisite of an orator. This is one reason why it is often of great consequence merely to *talk* for a given time, without conveying any real or tangible meaning to your audience. However unsatisfactory your reply

may be, defeat is never entire, when you have the courage to reply.

" If ever it was necessary to study the art of public speaking, it is at the present moment, when the salvation of the country depends upon the conduct of a single parliament. All our old party distinctions have passed away, and public men are divided into two great bodies, the conservative and the revolutionary. You have chosen, my dear son, the right side; the side to which you are called by the real interests of your order and your country. God grant that you may not begin your political life, by taking your seat in the last parliament of England."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Hope waits upon the flowery prime,
And summer, though it be less gay,
Yet is not look'd on as a time
Of declination and decay;
For with a full hand that does bring
All that was promised by the spring."

Waller.

Our story draws near its conclusion. I think another chapter, or two, at the most, may contain whatever else I have to tell. I have not the art to dally with the curiosity of my readers, to affect mystery, when there is no longer any secret to conceal; or to spin out into a goodly volume what may be related in a dozen pages. Whoever has loved—and, gentle reader, if you never loved, this story is not meant for you—whoever has loved, already knows with what speed Mowbray

hastened to Devondale, and with what sweet impatience, in spite of maidenly reserve, he was expected there. A lover never is so dear, as when it is discovered he has been injured.

But, by the nearest road, it is eighteen measured miles from Fairhaven to Mr. Arnot's gate. Let Mowbray's speed be what it will, we shall have some little time to look about us.

Caroline is at her harp, and Lady Cordelia Hamilton and her mother seem to listen. I never heard the young lady play so ill. They talk of Rossini, or Mozart, but one may see their thoughts are on another subject. They have begun to count the minutes.

There is a bustle in the hall. Caroline's voice trembles. The colour rushes to her cheek. Her mother looks at Lady Cordelia with a smile. The door opens. *It is not he.* Lady Deborah Dacre is announced. At this moment there is not one person in the three kingdoms more cordially detested than her ladyship.

We have a full half hour still. It was foolish to expect him so soon. Even by Caroline's calculation, Mowbray has hardly reached Borrodaile bridge. Let us hear what this teazing old woman has to say. She has come to visit Miss Hockley, I suppose, but she might have known she was not at home. What can she want?

She has began to abuse every body and every thing, as usual. Charity is the last virtue she will learn. She is talking about the ball at Wyaston. The company, one by one, the entertainments, the dresses, all furnish food for scandal. Mrs. Arnot's quiet apologies, Lady Cordelia's more animated defence of the absent, only stimulate her rancour. How can people find pleasure in ill-nature? Caroline Arnot can see no faults in any body this morning.

Then the private theatricals—Lady Deborah seems to have reserved more than a double portion of her wrath for them. She diverges into a general abuse of the drama and the stage. There

is a necessary connexion between the drama and the devil. Every actor is a reprobate, every actress an abandoned woman; the patrons of the stage are little better; amateurs are almost worse.

This tirade has a meaning. Her ladyship has a method in her madness. She has led the conversation to the subject of the late elopement.

"Doubtless you have heard that mysterious story about Miss Cibber?"

"We have, Lady Deborah. It is a painful subject. I knew the poor girl when she was a child, and I had the best opinion of her character."

"Your ladyship is aware that it is long since she has lost all pretension to character. Some people did say, to be sure, that she was privately married to Lord William, but there could have been no truth in that report, for his lordship is on the eve of marriage with another."

"With another?"

"Yes; I believe it is no secret. He is to be married immediately to Miss Flora Macdonald."

"I beg pardon, I did hear that rumour, but I believe I may venture to say it has no foundation."

"I rather think my authority is pretty good. The young lady's mother told me this morning that the day is fixed."

Lady Cordelia's colour changed.

Lady Deborah perceived the impression she had made, and the more she dwelt on the subject, became the more convinced that the story she had heard was true. By degrees she dropped some hints of her suspicions, and concluded by requesting a private interview with Lady Cordelia, in the course of which she told all she knew, and was confirmed in all she suspected.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Beauty, thou art a fair, but fading flower,
The tender prey of every coming hour;
In youth thou, comet-like, art gazed upon,
But art portentous to thyself alone;
Unpunished thou to few wert ever given,
Nor art a blessing, but a mark from heaven."

Ant. and Cleop.

On the night on which Maria Cibber left London in the strange manner I have described, she travelled eight hours without leaving the carriage, at the utmost speed of which the horses were capable.

In the dull twilight of a foggy winter morning she arrived at Burcot-Whittington, a miserable village in Hawkstone Forest. Her companion, who had reached it on horseback a few

minutes before, was waiting at the door of the only inn in the place.

It is a wretched hovel, the pretensions of which to that title are vouched by a huge portrait of Sir Godfrey Whittington, K. C. B. lord of the manor of Burcot-Whittington, with a sword in his hand, considerably longer than his whole body, and his right foot planted manfully on the stomach of a grinning mameluke. The sleepy chambermaid was yawning at an open window with her red hair enveloped in brown paper, and the slovenly, ungartered ostler, with bleared eyes and face unwashed, was shivering at the door with both hands thrust into his pockets.

Her companion approached the carriage, and said a few words in a low whisper.

"Removed!" exclaimed Maria: "good God! he will not survive it."

"It was necessary," replied Sillary (for it was he); "the officers were making the strictest search.

He would infallibly have been discovered, and then the unfortunate circumstance that there were no witnesses of the meeting, might have rendered the most strenuous exertions of his friends ineffectual on his behalf."

"Removed? and to the coast? Do you know the place exactly?"

"I do. He is in my brother's house at this moment."

"Then order fresh horses, and let us follow him instantly."

"That might create suspicion. It will be better to continue on the road to St. Alkmond for two stages. I have a cousin a few miles on this side of Ackworth, in whose house you may have some rest, and when you are ready to proceed, I will procure a horse for you, and we may take the cross-roads."

Maria had been told that Lord William, desperately wounded in a duel, which had proved fatal to his antagonist, had been obliged to con-

ceal himself from the officers of the law at Burcot-Whittington, until the state of his wounds should permit his removal to another country. The reader can easily foresee, that she was disappointed in her expectation of finding his lordship on the coast. For some days she was led from one spot to another through by-roads and unfrequented places, and by various conveyances, with the hourly hope of seeing her husband, and was at last told, that he had embarked on board a small vessel bound for the west of Ireland, where he meant to take refuge in the house of a friend. Thither the credulous girl insisted on following him without delay, and in little more than a week after she left London she was landed on the coast of a remote and desolate district in the province of Connaught.

The remains of a Norman castle of great extent nearly cover the face of a rocky promontory, stretching far into the ocean, and connected with the main land by a narrow isthmus. At high

tide, in tempestuous weather, the immense waves of the Atlantic lash over this isthmus without control. A strong north-west wind was blowing on the night Maria landed. The gray walls of the castle were wrapped almost to their summit in clouds of spray, and the billows broke in thunder on the rock below.

Wet, exhausted, fainting with toil, anxiety, and long abstinence from food and sleep, she was carried on the shoulders of the boatmen to the gate. A small wicket was opened by a wild half-naked Irishman, who either did not, or would not, understand their business, till Sillary addressed him in the Irish language. He then led the way through a succession of ruined courts and galleries to a distant corner of the building, the only part which showed signs of being inhabited. After ascending a narrow staircase of considerable height, they found themselves on a parapet which runs the whole length of the castle on the side fronting the sea. Their guide stop-

ped before a low door at the farther extremity. Sillary took a key from his hand. As he opened the door, whether by accident or design, the torch which the Irishman carried was extinguished, and from the outside no object was visible by the dim light within.

Maria entered. The door closed. The key was turned audibly in the lock, and the retiring footsteps of her companions were lost in the roar of the tempest. She stood an instant on the threshold, and as her eyes became accustomed to the light, she was able to distinguish a sofa in a remote corner of the room, on which a man reclined, of Lord William's size and appearance, wrapped in a large military cloak. His cap was drawn over his face, and he seemed to be asleep.

Maria approached the sofa with a light step. She sat down beside the sleeper, and leant one arm on the pillow which supported his head.

In a few minutes he began to move, and a slight groan showed him to be awake.

"William," whispered she, "are you in pain? I am here. It is your own Maria."

"My own! say but that word again, Maria, and I will worship you for ever," exclaimed Lord Tewkesbury, starting from the couch, and retaining her hand in his.

"My Lord Tewkesbury! what error, or what treachery is this? Is not Lord William here?"

"The treachery, if there be any, dearest Maria, is his lordship's. *He* contrived this plot, that you might not interrupt his marriage with another. Yet I will not call it treachery, since you are with one who loves you better than his life, and is ready to divide with you his fortune and his rank."

While the marquis was speaking, Maria seemed to be deprived of all power of motion

or utterance. Pale, breathless, and trembling, she leant on the sofa to prevent herself from falling, while her eyes wildly wandered from the speaker to the door, and from that to a long narrow window, many feet from the floor, against which the storm without was spending its fury. But when he had finished, she seemed to have gathered sudden strength from the very extremity of despair. She withdrew her hand from his grasp, and standing erect, answered in a firm unfaltering voice,

"And though that fortune were ten times as great, and that rank ten times as illustrious, I would scorn to participate in them with a man whom I despise."

"Will you, then, reject my offer, for the sake of one who has returned your affection with hatred and contempt? will you reject it for the love of one, who, even now, is leading, if he has not already led, another to the altar?"

Maria's eyes flashed fire as she replied,

"Contemptible fool, do you imagine you can deceive me by such fictions? Know, base man, I am the lawful wife of Lord William Plantagenet.——And, now that you have learned our secret, unlock that door, and let me begone. I do not fear you, my lord; though you had the vice, you have not the courage to insult Lord William's wedded wife."

"You are mistaken, lady. I know your whole history. I know the nature of that ceremony on which you rely, but, let me assure you, it has no force in law. Lord William is so advised, and has acted accordingly. But, if it had, where are your witnesses? You have no evidence to establish your story."

Maria made no answer. She stood erect, with folded arms, her lip still curled into a contemptuous smile, and her cheek no longer pale, but glowing with indignation.

Irritated by her firmness, the marquis paced the room with impatient strides. He seemed

to be gathering courage to address her in another tone. When he spoke at last, it was with eyes studiously averted, but in a bold determined voice.

"Listen to me, young woman," he said. "I have spoken to you gently, but you are in my power. This house is mine, and a stronger voice than yours could not bring you aid. Accept the offer which I have made you in the foolish blindness of passion, or prepare to yield to violence what you have refused to persuasion."

"He drew near, and laid his hand, with no gentle grasp, upon her arm."

The courage with which the weakest may be armed by virtue is, of all sights, the most sublime which man can contemplate. The eye of the ravisher quailed before the steady gaze of his victim, and he trembled as she answered in a voice more calm, and not less firm than his own,

"Unhand me, my lord, unhand me; and,

before you peril soul and body, fame and fortune, at least recollect what it is you risk. My feeble strength you may overpower. No aid may be at hand sufficient to defend me. But, unless you are ready to add murder to your other crimes, think not you have any chance of escaping the infamous punishment which the law has provided for such offences. No submission, no bribe, shall prevail on me to conceal your guilt. That which I refused before I imagined you capable of such outrage, I will refuse still more firmly to the cowardly ruffian you will prove yourself by its perpetration. My Lord Tewkesbury, if you will permit me to leave this house without further insult, I am ready to bind myself, by what oaths you please, to conceal the shameful artifice which you have practised, though my fame and happiness may be deeply injured by such silence; but, if you detain me here a single instant longer, neither fear, nor shame, shall prevent me from exposing

your infamy. Unhand me, my lord. Recollect you are an English nobleman, and blush for the cowardly outrage with which you have threatened an unprotected woman."

What effect her expostulation might have had, I know not: for, at this moment, voices, in angry dispute, were heard above the roar of the elements, with the sound of approaching feet. The door was burst open, and Harry Mowbray rushed into the room. By the light of many torches in the entrance, it was evident that he had sufficient support to defy resistance.

Why should I conclude with a dull chapter of explanations? All that I omit will be abundantly supplied by the imagination of my readers.

Maria, now Lord William's acknowledged but deserted wife, has returned to her native country. Flora Macdonald remains unmarried. Let us hope that Time, the comforter, may

bring them resignation, if he cannot bring them happiness. Harry Mowbray and Caroline Arnot will be united before these pages can reach the reader. Deprived of two most active members, Lord William and Lord Tewkesbury, who are both voluntary exiles from England, the Cabal continues to exist. In looking over the list in my possession, I recognize the names of several persons whose history is at least as interesting as that of those members whose portraits I have selected in the present story. If the public should receive them favourably, I may, perhaps, be induced to continue my sketches.

CONCLUSION.

The Editor of these pages thinks it necessary to address a few words to the reader, as an apology for the form in which they are presented to the public.

The manuscript was put into his hands by the author in a very mutilated and imperfect state, which rendered the task which he undertook, in ignorance of its nature, by no means easy. He is sensible that his young friend has left many things unexplained which require explanation. On one point it is as well to be explicit. The Editor has no suspicion that there are any such combinations of political men as those described in the course of the story, or that the more prominent characters are any

thing more than creatures of the imagination. He has his friend's express authority for adding, that, if he shall be thought to have alluded with improper virulence to those questions which have recently agitated the public mind, he will be most ready to apologize for an error into which he is conscious that he may have been seduced by a strong attachment to that political creed in which he has been educated.

The defects of the work, which are of a purely literary nature, must be left to the proper tribunal—the literary public. To plead the circumstances under which the work has been brought before them, would be to aggravate rather than to extenuate the offences of the author.

In conclusion, the Editor, through this, as the most convenient medium, has to request his friend's pardon for the liberties which he has taken with the manuscript—liberties which, perhaps, were hardly justified by the powers with

which he was intrusted. Had it not been for the curtailments which he has made, the work would have extended to another volume.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 041662567